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NATHANIEL HOLMES

*To the press first sent forth in 1851 — Perseusides*

NEW AND ENLARGED EDITION

WITH AN APPENDIX OF ADDITIONAL MATTERS, INCLUDING A NOTICE OF  
THE RECENTLY DISCOVERED NORTHUMBERLAND MSS., A SUPPLE-  
MENT OF FURTHER PROOFS THAT FRANCIS BACON WAS  
THE REAL AUTHOR, AND A FULL INDEX

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I.



BOSTON AND NEW YORK  
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY  
215 NASSAU ST. N.Y.  
1887



THE HISTORY OF THE  
LIFE OF  
THE  
BY  
J. H. H. H.

THE  
AUTHORSHIP OF SHAKESPEARE

BY  
NATHANIEL HOLMES

*Tò γὰρ αὐτὸ νοεῖν ἐστίν τε καὶ εἶναι. — Parmenides*

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BOSTON AND NEW YORK  
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The Riverside Press, Cambridge  
1887

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## PREFACE TO THE NEW AND REVISED EDITION.

---

THE additional matters which have come to my notice within the last ten years seemed to me to be of sufficient value to justify a supplement to a new edition of this work. It consists chiefly of considerations of the internal evidence arising out of a critical comparison of the writings in question, and it will further complete what I had to say upon the subject. The original book was largely occupied with the external evidences, and with such an exposition of Bacon's method and system of thought (and of the results to which they tended when interpreted by the light of modern science and philosophy) as seemed necessary for a proper elucidation of the whole inquiry; for all this was intimately involved in any adequate appreciation of the internal evidence. The order of the supplementary topics, with references back to the page where the same subject is mentioned, will give some unity to the whole and facilitate study; and the copious index added to this edition will much aid the investigator. The division into two volumes may be said to mark a formal separation of the more historical and literary from the more philosophical and critical portions of the work. Whatever may be the final conclusion of sound criti-



## PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

---

THE author takes this occasion to acknowledge the friendly consideration with which the former editions have been received by the public, so far as he is aware that the work has attracted attention. Those editions having been exhausted, another still seems to be called for. On its first appearance, the book was noticed by many of the public journals in this country, and by some in England, and in a manner for the most part highly complimentary to the writer, though by no means all were prepared to accede to his conclusions. Nor have all been ready to admit that he had added much to the considerations and proofs that had already been presented by others before him. The subject, however, has continued to be discussed in various ways, and, more recently, the candid and able summaries of the argument, which have appeared in "*Fraser's Magazine*," "*Scribner's Monthly*," and other periodicals of high literary character, would seem to indicate that the general interest in the question had rather increased than diminished.

The author has not hitherto found reason to modify his views, or statements, in any material respects. Such additional matters as have been brought to his notice, and were deemed of sufficient importance, have been added in the Appendix; and he trusts they may furnish a further justification for this new

edition of the work. He does not suppose that the inquiry has been exhausted, nor that the truth of the theory has yet been demonstrated to the satisfaction of all, but he scarcely expects himself to find another occasion for touching the subject.

## PREFACE.

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IN these days, perhaps, there needs be no apology for writing a book. But a book without a preface, like a dinner without a grace, would seem to be uncivil. Let us have, at least, "so much as will serve to be prologue to an egg and butter." This book must speak for itself: I did not see any good reason why it should not be printed. It may be, that the belles-letters critics will think little of it, or the trade still less, or the fixed orthodoxies, that it ought never to have been written at all, or the philosophers, that it is no great affair at best. But inasmuch as thought and knowledge among men lie stratified, as it were, like the densities of the ocean, or the air, in gradations infinite between the lower deeps and the higher realms, this book, like any other that is thrown into the flowing sea of things, may find its own level and so float somewhere; howsoever that level should come near to measuring the weight of book, writer, and reader. It does not presume to contain anything that is positively new, or that was unknown before: it claims only to state things in its own way. I have sometimes thought I had hit upon a new idea, or discovered a new fact, but I was pretty sure to find the same thing stated, or glanced at, in a week or so, in some newspaper, or in some book, new or old, and for that matter (it might be) as old as the



hieroglyphics. If some things in this book should be new to some readers, they will bear in mind the saying of Plato, that "what is strange is the result of ignorance in the case of all"; and if, to others, some things should appear to be either not new, or, if new, not true, they will, of course, exercise the common privilege and judge for themselves.

Doubtless there have been many who could never rest satisfied with the story of William Shakespeare, any more than a Coleridge, or a Schlegel; nor attain to any clear solution of the problem, that the spontaneous genius of a born poet, without the help of much learning, should come to see deeper into all the mysteries of God, Nature, and Man, and write better about the universal world, than the most accomplished scholars, critics, and philosophers, and be himself still unaware that he had done anything remarkable, wholly indifferent to fame (what might be no great wonder), and even (what may be more to the point) utterly heedless of the preservation of works which the author, howsoever he might deem them to be but trifles idly cast from him, could not but know to be "the wanton burthen of the prime" and the best (in that kind) of the age in which he lived, or of many ages:— as if he had been one,

" whose hand,  
Like the base Indian, threw a pearl away,  
Richer than all his tribe"; —

ai. unparalleled mortal, indeed! — nor of that other problem, that a common under-actor should turn poet, and, rummaging over the hereditary lumber of the play-house, should gather up the best of the traditional material, and through the limbec of his

capacious brain distil the quintessence of British genius from time immemorial, — a truly representative man, forsooth ! Incredulous men that have been born as well as poets, and perhaps never believed so much as the tale about Santa Claus, not to speak of many other prodigious miracles, may have preferred to disbelieve all the biographers, critics, and teachers ; or, if still believing them, to deny, flatly, in the outset, without further question, or any particular search, that there could be, or was, anything so very great in this Shakespeare drama after all ; or they may even have tried to persuade themselves that this ingenious actor had, by frequent hearing, caught the manner of the stage, and learned like a parrot to imitate the tone, style, and diction of tragedy and comedy alike ; still believing that no deep learning, no superior wisdom, no high art, and no divine revelation, beyond the natural flow of good native wit and sense, was to be found in these plays, and that what little learning the author had, was all borrowed, or picked up about the streets and theatres, allowing only that he was gifted with some sharp powers of observation, “ a facetious grace in writing,” and a pretty large amount of faculty in general. And so, not imagining that the highest and best things could spontaneously well up in such a man as from an original fountain of inspiration, they may have laid him up on a shelf, and never afterwards looked for such things in his works ; and the jewels that lay scattered within sight may have been passed by unseen, as if they had been pearls cast before swine : —

“ ’T is very pregnant,  
The jewel that we find, we stoop and take ’t,



Because we see it; but what we do not see,  
We tread upon, and never think of it."

*Meas. for Meas., Act II. Sc. 1.*

Bacon found it to be just so with the history of Winds; for, says he, "it is evident, that the dullness of men is such and so infelicitous, that when things are put before their feet, they do not see them, unless admonished, but pass right on." It would stand to reason, that the most precious things would not be strewn abroad thus by a mere swine-herd, if they had not come into his possession in an accidental or some other way, and without his having much knowledge of their real value; nor by a coney-catching, beer-drinking idler, or a common play-actor, or even a prosperous stage-manager. It must be admitted that learning does not come by instinct; nor can sensible men be made to believe that high philosophy can come by fantastic miracle. There never was any royal road to mathematics, though there have been very royal mathematicians.

An article appeared in Putnam's Magazine for January 1856 (afterwards known to have been written by Delia Bacon), in which some general considerations were set forth with much eloquence and ability, why William Shakespeare could not have written the plays which have been attributed to him; and the opinion was also pretty distinctly intimated, that Lord Bacon was the real author of them, or, at least, that he had had some hand in the work; but no proofs were then adduced. Being much struck with this idea, and for my own satisfaction, I began to look for the evidence on which such a proposition might rest, and finding it very considerable, and indeed quite amazing, I had thrown my

notes into some form, before the publication of Miss Bacon's work in 1857.<sup>1</sup> Her book not appearing to have satisfied the critical world of the truth of her theory, much more than the "Letter to Lord Ellesmere," by Mr. William Henry Smith, I have thought it worth while to give them the results of my studies also, which have been considerably extended, since that date; and if enough be not found herein to settle the question on impregnable grounds, it may at least tend to exculpate them from any supposition of mental aberration in so far as they have ascribed this authorship to Francis Bacon. But I do not at all agree with her opinion that any other person had a hand in the work: on the contrary, I will endeavor to show that the whole genuine canon of Shakespeare was written by this one and the same author.

It may be that some persons have been already convinced of this fact: but the critics appear to be agreed in rejecting the theory altogether. More direct and palpable proofs seem to be required; for this "our Shakespeare" was not to be stripped of the peerless mantle he had worn unquestioned for above two centuries and a half, on mere generalities, however conclusive to the mind of the philosophica. thinker. Certainly, if he is to be put on trial for his name and reputation, he has a right to be confronted with the proofs in the high court of criticism; and his jury, which is the great republic of letters, will require the best and the most ample evidence to be produced, before they will agree to disrobe him of all his honors. On nothing less than proof, the most positive, direct, and complete, will those "foreign

<sup>1</sup> *Philosophy of the Plays of Shakspeare Unfolded.* By Delia Bacon, with Preface by Nathaniel Hawthorne. London and Boston, 1857.

nations and next ages," to whom the final appeal was made, now consent (such is the tenacity of long adverse possession) to eject the ass from the lion's skin, and turn over the rich legacy they have so long accepted in his name to the credit of another, though that other be one who considered his name and memory worth bequeathing to them :—

*Blanch.* O, well did he become that lion's robe  
That did disrobe the lion of that robe!

*Bast.* It lies as sightly on the back of him  
As great Alcides' shews upon an ass. —  
But, ass, I'll take that burthen from your back,  
Or lay on that shall make your shoulders crack."

*K. John, Act II. Sc. 1.*

It should be understood, to what manner of man this authorship belongs; for it is not only

"a fault to heaven,  
A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,  
To reason most absurd,"

but a positive injury done to learning and philosophy, and to every individual scholar and man, who shall be taught to believe the enormous impossibility that such works could be, and were, written by mere genius without learning, or by some more fantastically supernatural inspiration. Does not any honest man feel an unutterable indignation, when he discovers (after long years of thought and study, perhaps), that he has been all the while misled by false instruction, and that, consequently, the primest sources of truth have been left lumbering his shelves in neglect, because he could not, or even because he could (for it would be much the same thing with him, if he could) be made to believe that anything more could come from a very common (or indeed a very uncommon) person, than such a man could



know, and that he has thus been drawn aside by false shadows from those paths which alone can lead to a comprehensible philosophy of the universe, the real basis at last of his everlasting accountabilities, and been put off and befooled with paltry child's fables? By the help of the Eternal Power and such abilities as we possess, let the truth and the proof of it come forth as fast, and spread as wide, as it is possible to make it. There is no danger of its getting too far by any means whatever.

The chief object of this work is, to do something toward making the truth of this matter appear, still more clearly, and on other and (if possible) quite unanswerable grounds. It was written under the supposition that no one else would undertake to do the same thing better; and it is published because it is believed that the duty is not yet sufficiently done (and I know very well how inadequate is this attempt to do it), that sublime duty, which the great testator, by his last will, left to foreign nations and the next ages to perform, whenever they should be able like himself to comprehend "the universal world," and, with Plato, to recognize the Philosopher, the Poet, the Seer, and the Saviour of men, for all one,—justice to his name and memory.

For the quotations from the Plays of Shakespeare, I have preferred to make them conform to the text of the edition edited by Richard Grant White, and published in Boston, in 1859–1862, except in a very few instances in which his emendations, or previous readings, appeared to me to be so clearly erroneous that I could not accept them; and I have done this the more readily, because this edition has

evidently been edited with great care, good critical judgment, and excellent scholarship, and especially for the reason that the editor has taken the Folio of 1623 as the basis of his text and his criticism.

For the text of Bacon, I have used the edition of his works edited by Basil Montagu (London 1825), and the American republication of it (Philadelphia 1854), and also the excellent edition of Spedding, Ellis, and Heath (since the republication of it in Boston, in 1860-1864), which has been edited with extraordinary learning and ability; but as the larger part of my work was done before this edition appeared, I have not thought it worth while to undertake the labor of making the references conform to either one edition only. Wherever I have discovered an erroneous reading to have been corrected by the later and better edition, I have not failed to profit by it. In making quotations from the Latin works, I have not hesitated to give my own translations, when no better were at hand, but always with especial care to preserve as far as possible the style, manner, and diction of the author, and, at all events, the exact meaning of the original, as it would be expressed in the language of modern philosophy.

For the Letters of Bacon, I have had to depend mainly upon the edition of Montagu, but with the valuable assistance of the first two volumes of the "Letters and Life of Lord Bacon" by James Spedding (London 1861-2), which contain the letters and occasional works down to the year 1601, carefully edited and explained in chronological order; and I have regretted exceedingly that the remaining volumes of this interesting and important work have not yet appeared.

The Frontispiece, engraved and brought to life by Mr. Joseph Andrews of Boston, is taken from the engraving (in Montagu's edition) of the white marble monument which was erected to the memory of Lord Bacon by "the care and gratitude" of Sir Thomas Meautys, within the precincts of old Verulam, "representing his full portraiture in the posture of studying," says Dr. Rawley, together with a part of the inscription composed by that "rare wit," Sir Henry Wotton.

Without more, the work is submitted to the consideration and judgment of the general jury of candid readers; and, as more than one author has said before, if they shall find half the pleasure in reading it that I have had in writing it, they shall be welcome.

N. HOLMES.

St. Louis, May 21st, 1866.



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THE  
AUTHORSHIP OF SHAKESPEARE

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CHAPTER I.

PRELIMINARIES. — SHAKESPEARE.

"Do not inflate plain things into marvels, but reduce marvels to plain things."  
BACON

§ 1. EARLY LIFE.

THE biography of WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE may now be considered as in the main settled and fixed for all time. Modern research has explored every forgotten corner in search of new facts; all discoverable archives and dusty repositories of lost books and derelict papers have been ransacked; every known record, monument, and relic, of the age in which he lived, has been thoroughly questioned, even to the last trace and tradition of his name and family; and, failing any further genuine data, the most ingenious and consummate forgeries have been attempted. And if all honest inquiry be not yet exhausted, it has been made sufficiently clear, at least, that but little more can be added hereafter to what is already known of his personal history, and nothing that can be expected materially to change the general scope and character of the latest received account of his life. He is thus delivered down to us as essentially an uneducated man, whether we are to speak of education in the sense of modern times, or of the sixteenth century, or of the ancient schools. True, there have been great self-educated men in all times; as, indeed, who is not, at last, in one sense, a self-educated man? That there is a

most difference, however, between the learning and philosophy which the same genius will attain to, in a given time, in any age, with the aid of all existing helps, and that which he may reach without such aid, no man needs to be informed. School, or no school, without books and studies, we know that learning is impossible.

Beyond that primary instruction which could be obtained at the free grammar-school of Stratford-on-Avon, in which Latin was taught by one master, nearly three centuries ago, it is pretty certain that William Shakespeare had no learning from public institutions, or from private tuition. His father, John Shakespeare, a glover by trade, sometime wool-stapler and butcher, at different times constable, high bailiff, and alderman of Stratford-on-Avon, and, at last, a gentleman, by grant of a coat-of-arms from the Herald's College, in 1599, at the instance of his son William, when he had attained to prosperity, was no doubt a respectable burgier of that place, but certainly so illiterate that he could not write his own name, and executed written instruments by making his mark; and the same was the case with his mother, notwithstanding that she was descended of an ancient family of goodly estate. From the manner in which the name was written by members of the family in Warwickshire, it is evident that it was usually pronounced *Shaxper*, though it seems to have had no fixed spelling among them, not even with William himself, for his autographic signatures to his will appear to have it both *Shaxpere* and *Shakspeare*; but it was printed in his lifetime, and in the Folio of 1623, and passed into the contemporary literature, as *Shakspeare*; and so let it remain.<sup>1</sup>

William Shakespeare was born at Stratford-on-Avon, on the 23d day of April, 1564, and according to what is known of his early life, he attended the free grammar-school of that place for some few years and until about the year 1578, when he was taken from school, his assistance being

<sup>1</sup> Halliwell's *Life of William Shakespeare*, London, 1848.

required by his father in his business at home. The occupations in which his father appears to have been engaged, at this time, were those of an ordinary yeoman, including the business of a glover, a wool-stapler, and, as some say, a butcher also; and he was, at the same time, and down to the year 1586, an alderman of the corporation of Stratford. On the 28th day of November, 1582, the son William was married, at the age of eighteen, to Ann Hathaway, some years older than himself, and the daughter of a neighboring farmer. Their eldest daughter, Susanna, was born in May following; but his latest biographer thinks there must have been some preliminary espousals, in accordance with a frequent custom of the time, as early as the summer of 1582.<sup>1</sup> After this date, his father appears to have fallen into embarrassed circumstances. He was superseded in his office of alderman, in 1586, for non-attendance, and was presented as a recusant, in 1592, "for not coming to church for feare of process for debt." There is indubitable evidence that, for several years prior to 1587, different theatrical companies from London occasionally visited Stratford-on-Avon (the native place of some of the actors), in some instances, under the patronage of John Shakespeare and other aldermen; and it is highly probable that the son William would be attracted to their company. There are uncertain traditions also that, during this period, he had been in the habit of drinking beer with the pot-house clubs, hunting coneyes for amusement, and poaching on the neighboring deer-parks by way of romance, until he was driven away from Stratford by the persecution of Sir Thomas Lucy; but whether from this cause, or driven by stress of poverty, or merely drawn by the attractions of the theatre, it appears that, about the year 1587, he went up to London, carrying with him but a small stock of learning, and became attached to the theatre in a very humble capacity. Ben Jonson informs us that he had "but small Latin

<sup>1</sup> Halliwell.



and less Greek"; and "rare Ben" must certainly have known the truth of the matter. Indeed, it is plain his learning must have been little enough, however obtained; and in this, all the traditions concur. Precisely how his time was employed, during these nine years after leaving the grammar-school, of course we cannot certainly know; but there is no intimation in anything that has come down to us, that he was at all given to books, or to studies of any kind. The employments in which it would seem to be almost certain he must have been engaged, the circumstances which surrounded him, and the few details of his life which have been preserved, would all go to exclude the hypothesis of his having given any considerable attention to letters or studies, in this period. There is no written composition of his in existence, belonging to this time, and no proof that there ever was any, except a mere tradition of a lampoon upon Sir Thomas Lucy, of which no scrap has been authentically preserved. The verses which later traditions have attributed to him, whether as fragments of this supposed lampoon, or as epitaphs and epigrams written towards the close of his career, are, as any one may see, but miserable doggerel at best, and might have been written by the sorriest poetaster. With Halliwell and other critics, though immaterial to our purpose, we may safely reject them all as having no reliable basis of authenticity, and as necessarily implying, on the supposition of such basis, "a deterioration of power for which no one has assigned a sufficient reason."<sup>1</sup> The critic who would find a trace of the great poet in these performances, should remember Bacon's caution to the interpreter of nature: "If the sow with her snout should happen to imprint the letter A upon the ground, wouldst thou, therefore, imagine she could write out a whole tragedy as one letter?"<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Halliwell, 270.

<sup>2</sup> *Interp. of Nat., Works*, by Montagu, (London), XV., 101; *Temporis Partus Mas., Works*, by Spedding, Ellis, and Heath, (Boston), VII., 30.

## § 2. EMPLOYMENTS.

That his first employment, on coming to London, was that of a link-boy, holding horses at the door of the theatre, as some traditions represent, would seem to be very questionable; but that it was not in any capacity above that of a mere "servitor," or under-actor, his most careful biographers seem to admit as highly probable, if not quite certain. The first certain knowledge that we have of him in London, however, is of the date of 1592, when there seems to have been a distinct allusion to his name in Greene's "Groatsworth of Wit," in which, apparently speaking for himself and other writers for the stage against the actors, "those Anticks garnisht in our colours," Greene says: "Yes, trust them not; for there is an upstart crow beautified with our feathers, that with his Tygres heart, wrapt in a players hyde, supposes hee is as well able to bombast out a blank verse as the best of you; and beeing an absolute *Johannes factotum*, is, in his owne conceyt, the only Shake-scene in a countrey."<sup>1</sup> From this it may be inferred that he was beginning to have some kind of reputation as an author of plays, and, in 1593-4, the "Venus and Adonis" and the "Rape of Lucrece" are dedicated to the Earl of Southampton under his name. From this time forward a few scattered notices of him have been gathered up from contemporary records and documents relating to purchases of lands, his money dealings with his neighbors, and ordinary business transactions; but, abating all merely mythical traditions of uncertain origin, and the impudent forgeries of these later times, no further authentic reference to his position in the theatre occurs until 1598, when his name is mentioned by Meres as the reputed author of several of these plays, and two of them are printed with his name as author on the title-page, in that year. That he was one of the inhabitants of Southwark,

<sup>1</sup> See Halliwell's *Life*, 144.

dwelling near the Bear Garden in 1596, seems to rest upon very questionable authority; but, in 1597, he had purchased New Place, in Stratford-on-Avon, where his family continued to reside until his death. In 1598, we find him lending money to his neighbors, and performing his part on the stage; and in 1599, he had succeeded in obtaining for his father the grant of a coat of arms from the Herald's College, which descended to himself in 1601. And in 1604, when the perfected "Hamlet" had been produced, he had become a leading manager and sharer in the Globe and Blackfriars, and his name stood second only in the list of patentees, "His Majesty's Servants." From this date until 1613, the personal notices that remain to us exhibit him as being always very attentive to matters of business, rapidly growing in estate, purchasing farms, houses, and tythes in Stratford, bringing suits for small sums against various persons for malt delivered, money loaned, and the like, carrying on agricultural pursuits and other kinds of traffic, with "a good grip o' the siller," and executing business commissions in London for his Stratford neighbors, while we are to suppose he was, at the same time, producing such plays as the "Hamlet," the "Macbeth," the "Othello," the "Lear," and the "Julius Cæsar"; whence it might certainly be concluded, that he had an excellent capacity for business in addition to his other arts and superhuman gifts; but there is nowhere the slightest note or trace of his literary occupations.

He had now acquired a brilliant reputation and an ample estate. It seems probable that he quit acting upon the stage about the year 1608, and that, in 1610, he finally retired from any active participation in the affairs of the theatre, though he may have still continued to receive for a time his share of the income as one of the largest proprietors; but how long, it is not certainly known. It would seem probable, however, that he had parted with his interest in the theatres sometime before the 30th of June, 1613



when the Globe theatre was destroyed by fire. It is known that as late as March, 1613, he made the purchase of a house in the Blackfriars; and this is the last transaction in which he is positively ascertained to have been concerned in London. After this date, we hear of him only at Stratford-on-Avon, attending to business and the ordinary affairs of life, leisurely enjoying the social intercourse of his neighbors and his family, until his death in 1616. Indeed, throughout his life (as his most zealous biographer is obliged to confess), "the best evidence we can produce exhibits him as paying more regard to his social affairs than to his profession."<sup>1</sup> And so, it would seem to be true, as some still think, that, in the words of Pope, —

"Shakespeare, whom you and every playhouse-bill  
Style the divine, matchless, what you will,  
For gain, not glory, wing'd his roving flight,  
And grew immortal in his own despoight."

### § 3. MANUSCRIPTS.

No original manuscript of any play, or poem, letter, or other prose composition, in the handwriting of William Shakespeare, has ever been discovered: none is known to have been preserved within the reach of the remotest definite tradition. It does not appear by any direct proof that the original manuscript of any one of the plays or poems was ever seen, even in his own time, in his own handwriting, under such circumstances as to afford any conclusive evidence, however probable, that he was the original author. "I remember," says Ben Jonson, "the players have often mentioned it as an honour to Shakespeare, that in his writing (whatsoever he penn'd) hee never blotted out line." We have only to suppose for a moment that the manuscripts may have been copied by him from some unknown complete and finished originals, which were kept a secret from the world, and this wonder of the players would be

<sup>1</sup> Halliwell, 194.



at once explained. Meres, in 1598, speaks of "his sugred sonnets among his private friends," as if they had been circulated in manuscript; but even this does not exclude the possibility of another having been the author, in the same way, though in itself highly improbable at first view. That he was universally reputed to be the author of these works, in his own time, not merely by the public in general, but by contemporary writers, his fellows of the theatre, the printers and publishers, and some great personages, and that the fact was never publicly questioned, in that age, nor indeed until a very recent date, must be admitted, though some evidence may be adduced herein, tending to show that the contrary was known, or at least strongly suspected, by some few persons at that day. It is enough here to remark, that this reputation alone is not absolutely conclusive of the question. No more is that other very pregnant circumstance, the fact that the "Venus and Adonis" and the "Rape of Lucrece" were dedicated to the Earl of Southampton under the name of William Shakespeare; for it is clearly possible, however improbable at first view, that even this may have been arranged and designed as a cover for the real author. In short, there is no positive and direct evidence in any contemporary record, fact, circumstance, or event, relating to Shakespeare, which is in itself of such a nature that it must be accepted in his favor as conclusive of the question of this authorship. He makes no mention of his manuscripts, or literary property, in his will; nor is there a trace of evidence that they ever came into the possession of his executors, or of any member of his family. But for this there may have been the less occasion, if we assume that the manuscript copies had all been sold to the theatre, and that not a single duplicate copy had ever been retained in his own possession. It might be possible, indeed, that some of them may have been burnt with the Globe theatre in 1613: when the Fortune was burnt in 1621, we know the play-books were all lost. It is

a wholly gratuitous assumption, however, though barely possible, that they were heedlessly cast aside into old chests, and suffered to be destroyed by fires, or that they fell into the hands of ignorant persons to be used for waste paper. If he had contemplated a revision of his works for publication during his own life, from the accomplishment of which he was prevented by sudden illness and death, it is scarcely credible that he should not have given some instructions to that end, either to his executors in his will, or to some confidential friend on whom such injunction would not have been lost. Heming and Condell give us no intimation, in their Preface to the Folio of 1623, from what source they had received "the true original copies": we are left to infer that they had gathered them up from the theatres owned by the company.

#### § 4. HIS LEARNING.

For the learning of Shakespeare, his knowledge of history and of the manners, customs, and literature of the ancients, his acquaintance with foreign languages, his natural science and metaphysical philosophy, his skill in the medical lore of his time, as also in the laws of England, his familiarity with the manners of the Court and high society, the vast range of his observation in all the realms of nature and art, as well as in all that pertains to the civil state, or to the affairs of private life, or to the characters, passions, and affections of men and women, or to human life and destiny, the subtle profundity of his intellect, and his extraordinary insight into all the relations of things,—all this, and much more than can be stated, must wholly depend upon the argument to be drawn from the internal evidence contained in the writings themselves, not only unsupported in any adequate manner, but for the most part absolutely contradicted by the known facts of his personal history. It is apparent that this argument can have no weight whatever in favor of William Shakespeare, until the

fact be established that he was really the author of these works ; and this is the very question we have in hand.

The learning and philosophy of these plays of Shakespeare, especially since the feeble attempt of Dr. Farmer to make them appear to be possible for the supposed author, have been a matter of wonder to editorial critics, and a stumbling-block to all great writers, who have treated of the subject. Even Dr. Johnson was willing to admit he must have had "Latin enough to grammaticize his English," while conceding that Ben Jonson must have known, and "ought to decide the controversy."<sup>1</sup> Pope, knowing well enough that there was "certainly a vast difference between *learning* and *languages*, thought it was "plain he had much reading, at least," but was obliged, at last, to declare that "he seems to have known the world by intuition, to have looked through human nature at one glance, and to be the only author that gives ground for a very new opinion, that the philosopher and even the man of the world may be *born*, as well as the poet."<sup>2</sup> Steevens and Malone, after laborious research, undertook to produce a list of the translations of ancient authors, known to have existed in English in the time of Shakespeare, as the source of all his classical erudition ; but it falls far short of furnishing a satisfactory explanation of the matter, in our day, and in the face of numerous instances to the contrary, scarcely less decisive than this one, that the "Timon of Athens" turns out to have been founded in great part upon the untranslated Greek of Lucian ;<sup>3</sup> besides that it is now clear enough to the attentive scholar, that this author drew materials, ideas, and even expressions, from the tragedies of Sophocles and Euripides, and even from Plato, no less than from the Latin of Ovid, Virgil, Horace, Seneca, and Tacitus, not to mention numerous others of the ancient

<sup>1</sup> Johnson's Preface.

Pope's Preface.

<sup>3</sup> Knight's *Stud. of Shaks.*, 71; *Luc. Opera* (ed. Dindorf, Lipsiæ, 1858), I. 30-51.



classics, and apparently with the utmost indifference to the question whether they had ever been translated into English or not.

Indeed, his learning took the widest range. Mr. Collier, profoundly impressed by a certain frequency of legal terms and expressions in the plays, is ready, thereupon, to add an entire new passage to the known biography of William Shakespeare, to the effect that, in his youth, he had studied law in the office of an attorney, or, at least, a bailiff, at Stratford; and the learned essay of Lord Chief Justice Campbell,<sup>1</sup> addressed to him upon the subject, comes to this conclusion upon Shakespeare's juridical phrases and forensic allusions: "On the retrospect I am amazed," says his Lordship, "not only by their number, but by the accuracy and propriety with which they are uniformly introduced." And he adds: "There is nothing so dangerous as for one not of the craft to tamper with our freemasonry." He thought we might be "justified in believing the fact that he was a clerk in an attorney's office at Stratford without any direct proof of the fact," mainly relying, with Mr. Collier, upon "the seemingly utter impossibility of Shakespeare having acquired, on any other theory, the wonderful knowledge of law which he undoubtedly displays." Nevertheless, his Lordship was constrained to warn his friend, that he had not "really become an absolute convert" to his side of the question; nor did he fail to remark, that the theory required us "implicitly to believe a fact, which, were it true, positive and irrefragable evidence, in Shakespeare's own handwriting" in the records of the courts, or in deeds and wills written or witnessed by him, and preserved in the archives at Stratford-on-Avon, might have been forthcoming to establish it; but, "after diligent search," none such had been, or could be, discovered.

The argument might justify, but does not require, an examination here into the special learning of this author in

<sup>1</sup> *Shakespeare's Legal Acquirements* (N. York, 1859), p. 132.

matters of law, or medicine. This work has already been so far accomplished by distinguished members of these professions as to convince them, if not the critical world, that he had a very wonderful acquaintance with both. Let it suffice to notice a single instance (cited by Lord Campbell<sup>1</sup>) of his familiarity with Plowden, whose preface was dated from the Middle Temple, in 1578, the same year in which William Shakespeare is said to have been taken from school by his father, at the age of fourteen. The discussion of the grave-diggers in the "Hamlet," as to whether the drowned Ophelia was entitled to Christian burial, "proves," says his Lordship, "that Shakespeare [he meant, of course, the author of the play] had read and studied Plowden's Report of the celebrated case of *Hales v. Petit*."<sup>2</sup> Sir James Hales, a Judge of the Common Pleas, having been imprisoned for being concerned in the plot to place Lady Jane Grey upon the throne, and afterwards pardoned, was so affected in mind as to commit suicide by drowning himself in a river. The coroner's inquest found a verdict of *felo de se*, under which his body was to be buried at a cross-road, with a stake thrust through it, and his goods and estates were forfeited to the crown. A knotty question arose upon the suit of his widow for an estate by survivorship in joint-tenancy, whether the forfeiture could be considered as having taken place in the lifetime of Sir James Hales; for, if it did not, she took the estate by survivorship.

*Sergeant Southcote* argued for the lady, that as long as he was alive he had not killed himself, and the moment that he died, the estate vested in the plaintiff. "The felony of the husband shall not take away her title by survivorship, for in this manner of felony two things are to be considered: First, the cause of the death; secondly, the death ensuing the cause; and these two make the felony, and without both of them the felony is not consummate. And

<sup>1</sup> *Shakes. Leg. Acq.*, p. 104.

<sup>2</sup> Plowden's Rep., 256-9.

the cause of the death is the act done in the party's lifetime, which makes the death to follow. And the act which brought on the death here was the throwing himself voluntarily into the water, for this was the cause of his death. And if a man kills himself by a wound which he gives himself with a knife, or if he hangs himself, as the wound or the hanging, which is the act done in the party's lifetime, is the cause of his death, so is the throwing himself into the water here. Forasmuch as he cannot be attainted of his own death, because he is dead before there is any time to attain him, the finding of his death by the coroner is by necessity of law equivalent to an attainder in fact coming after his death. He cannot be *felo de se* till the death is fully consummate, and the death precedes the felony and the forfeiture."

Sergeant Walsh, on the other side, argued that the forfeiture had relation to *the act done* in the party's lifetime, which was the cause of his death. "*Upon this the parts of the act are to be considered; and the act consists of three parts. The first* is the imagination, which is a reflection or meditation of the mind, whether or no it is convenient for him to destroy himself, and what way it can be done. *The second* is the resolution, which is a determination of the mind to destroy himself, and to do it in this or that particular way. *The third* is the perfection, which is the execution of what the mind has resolved to do. And this perfection consists of two parts, viz., the beginning and the end. The beginning is the doing of the act which causes the death; and the end is the death, which is only a sequel to the act. *And of all the parts the doing of the act* is the greatest in the judgment of our law, and it is in effect the whole. *The doing of the act is the only point* which the law regards; for until the act is done it cannot be an offence to the world, and when the act is done it is punishable. Inasmuch as the person who did the act is dead, his person cannot be punished, and therefore *there is no way else to*



punish him but by the forfeiture of those things which were his own at the time of his death."

*Bendloe* cited a case in which "a lunatic wounded himself mortally with a knife, and afterwards became of sound mind, and had *the rights of Holy Church*, and after died of the said wound, and his chattels were not forfeited;" and *Carus* cited another, "where it appears that one who had taken sanctuary in a church was out in the night, and the town pursued him, and *the felon defended himself with clubs and stones*, and would not render himself to the King's peace, and one struck off his head; and the goods of the person killed were forfeited, for he could not be arraigned, because *he was killed by his own fault*, for which reason, *upon the truth of the matter found*, his goods were forfeited. Here, the inquiry before the coroner *super visum corporis*, . . . . is equivalent to a judgment given against him in his lifetime, and the forfeiture has relation to the act which was the cause of his death, viz. the throwing himself into the water."

*Dyer*, C. J., giving the opinion of the Court, said:—"The forfeiture shall have relation to the act done by Sir James Hales in his lifetime, which was the cause of his death, viz. the throwing himself into the water." He made five points:—"First, the quality of the offence; secondly, to whom the offence was committed; thirdly, what he shall forfeit; fourthly, from what time; and fifthly, if the term here shall be taken from the wife." . . . . *As to the second point*, it is an offence against nature, against God, and against the King. Against nature, for *every living thing does by instinct of nature defend itself from destruction*, and then to destroy one's self is contrary to nature, and a thing most horrible. Against God, in that it is a breach of his commandment, *thou shalt not kill*; and to kill himself, by which he kills in presumption his own soul, is a greater offence than to kill another. Against the King, in that hereby he has lost a subject, and (as *Brown* termed it) he

being the head, has lost one of his mystical members."

. . . It was agreed by all the Judges, "that he shall forfeit all his goods; for *Brown* said the reason why the King shall have the goods and chattels of a *felo de se*, . . . . is not because he is *out of Holy Church*, so that for that reason the Bishop will not meddle with them,

. . . but for the loss of his subject, and for the breach of his peace, and for the evil example given to his people, and not in respect that Holy Church will not meddle with them, *for he is adjudged none of the members of Holy Church.*"

"*As to the fourth point, viz., to what time the forfeiture shall have relation; the forfeiture here shall have relation to the time of the original offence committed, which was the cause of the death, and that was the throwing himself into the water, which was done in his lifetime, and this act was felony. . . . So that the felony is attributed to the act, which is always done by a living man, and in his lifetime: for Sir James Hales was dead, and how came he to his death? By drowning. And who drowned him? Sir James Hales. And when did he drown him? In his lifetime. So that Sir James Hales being alive caused Sir James Hales to die; and the act of the living man was the death of the dead man. But how can he be said to be punished alive when the punishment comes after his death? Sir, this can be done no other way than by divesting out of him his title and property, from the time of the act done which was the cause of his death, viz. the throwing himself into the water.*"

Now, that this very report is plainly travestied in the "*Hamlet*," can admit of no possible doubt. Ophelia had not drowned herself voluntarily, but, like the lunatic who became of sound mind, and had "the rights of Holy Church," to the glassy stream, where "a willow grows aslant the brook,"

"There, with fantastic garlands, did she come,"

and

There, on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds  
 Clamb'ring to hang, an envious sliver broke,  
 When down her weedy trophies and herself  
 Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide,  
 And mermaid-like, a while they bore her up;  
 Which time, she chanted snatches of old tunes;  
 As one incapable of her own distress,  
 Or like a creature native and indu'd  
 Unto that element: but long it could not be,  
 Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,  
 Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay  
 To muddy death." — *Act IV. Sc. 7.*

Otherwise, as the author well knew, the Coroner's inquest would have found her a "*felo de se*," and she must have been buried, as one "out of Holy Church," at a cross-road, where, says the *Priest*, —

"Her obsequies have been as far enlarg'd  
 As we have warrantise: her death was doubtful;  
 And but that great command o'ersways the order,  
 She should in ground unsanctified have lodg'd,  
 Till the last trumpet: for charitable prayers,  
 Shards, flints, and pebbles should be thrown on her;  
 Yet here she is allow'd her virgin rites,  
 Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home  
 Of bell and burial." — *Act V. Sc. 1.*

And in the same scene in which, with all technical skill in the use of the abstrusest terms of the law, he so easily empties "the skull of a lawyer" of "his quiddits now, his quillets, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks," . . . . his action of battery, . . . . his statutes, his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries," now that "the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries" is, "to have his fine pate full of fine dirt," he makes the clowns discourse, on the question of the voluntary drowning and the right to Christian burial, thus : —

"1st Clo. Is she to be buried in Christian burial, that wilfully seeks her own salvation?"

2d Clo. I tell thee, she is; and therefore make her grave straight: the set on her, and finds it Christian burial.



1st Clo. How can that be, unless she drown'd herself in her own defence?

2d Clo. Why, 'tis found so.

1st Clo. It must be so *offendendo*; it cannot be else. For here lies the point: if I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act, and an act hath three branches; it is, to act, to do, and to perform: argal, she drowned herself wittingly.

2d Clo. Nay, but hear you, Goodman delver.

1st Clo. Give me leave. Here lies the water; good: here stands the man; good: if the man go to this water, and drown himself, it is, will he, nill he, he goes; mark you that: but if the water come to him, and drown him, he drowns not himself: argal, he that is not guilty of his own death shortens not his own life.

2d Clo. But is this law?

1st Clo. Ay, marry, is't; crowner's quest law.

2d Clo. Will you ha' the truth on't? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out of Christian burial.

1st Clo. Why, there thou say'st, and the more pity, that great folk shall have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves, more than their even Christian." — *Act V. Sc. 1.*

A careful comparison of these passages may satisfy the critical reader that the author of the play had certainly read this report of Plowden. They are not adduced here as amounting to proof that the author was any other than William Shakespeare, but rather as a circumstance bearing upon the antecedent probabilities of the case; for there is not the slightest ground for a belief, on the facts which we know, that Shakespeare ever looked into Plowden's Reports; while it is quite certain that Francis Bacon, who commenced his legal studies at Gray's Inn in the very next year after the date of Plowden's preface, did have occasion to make himself familiar with that work, some years before the appearance of the "Hamlet." And the mode of reasoning, and the manner of the report, bordering so nearly upon the ludicrous, would be sure to impress the memory of Bacon, whose nature, as we know, was singularly capable of wit and humor.

Not less curious is it to observe, that Mr. Hackett, as early as 1859, noticing the numerous metaphorical expres-

sions in the plays, which relate to the flowing of the blood to and from the heart or liver, and which imply, when closely examined, a critical knowledge of the physiology of this subject, as understood by professional authors down to that day, has actually maintained the proposition that William Shakespeare had anticipated the celebrated Harvey in the discovery of the circulation of the blood.<sup>1</sup> And not much later, a distinguished English physician, following the example of Lord Campbell in the department of law, has undertaken to demonstrate that "the immortal dramatist," though he had not discovered the circulation of the blood, had nevertheless "paid an amount of attention to subjects of *medical* interest scarcely if at all inferior to that which has served as the basis of the learned and ingenious argument, that this intellectual king of men had devoted seven good years of his life to the practice of law."<sup>2</sup> Moreover, this same writer, on diligent examination, was "surprised and astonished" at "the extent and exactness of the psychological knowledge displayed" in these plays, and very naturally came to the conclusion that "abnormal conditions of mind had attracted Shakespeare's diligent observation, and had been his favorite study."<sup>3</sup> He finds instances which amount "not merely to evidence, but to proof, that Shakespeare had read widely in medical literature," and continues thus:—"For the honor of medicine, it would be difficult to point to any great author, not himself a physician, in whose works the healing art is referred to more frequently and more respectfully than in those of Shakespeare." Dr. Bucknill even ventures to suggest that the marriage of Shakespeare's eldest daughter, in 1607, with Dr. John Hall, the physician, who afterwards lived in the same house with him at Stratford-on-Avon, may have been the means of imparting to the mind of the poet some

<sup>1</sup> *Notes on Shakes. Plays and Actors* (New York, 1863), p. 268.

<sup>2</sup> *Shakes. Med. Knowl.*, by John Charles Bucknill, M. D., London, 1860.

<sup>3</sup> *Psychology of Shakes.*, by John Charles Bucknill, M. D., London, 1859.



degree of medical knowledge. But unfortunately for the theory, nearly all the plays from which the most striking passages concerning the flow of the blood have been culled, were written prior to that date, and some of them long before. Mr. Halliwell seems to think there may have been some intimacy between the poet and the doctor: "long previous to the marriage," and as the Shakespeare "must have made himself acquainted with every important fact or theory which had transpired in relation to the subject." This is indeed possible; but it would be a more satisfactory explanation of this very special feature in the play, if it did not require us to carry back his medical studies, at least, to the date of the "*King Lear*," and almost make them extract upon those seven good years already demanded for the study of law, especially in the absence of any positive evidence in his personal history that he had ever looked into a book of law or medicine.

But Dr. Beckwith, as well as the American physician who controverted the views of Mr. Halliwell, were thoroughly versed in medical science, and accordingly made it appear, not merely that the Shakespearean expression is not imply a knowledge of the circulation of the blood, in the sense of Harvey, but that they are, in truth, in very exact accordance with the doctrines of Galen, Hippocrates, Rabelais, and others, who were prior to Harvey, "the learned and authentic fellows" in the branch of knowledge, and with whose writings, as we certainly know, the Francis Bacon was quite familiar, for he cites and reviews these very authors, together with Aristotle, Celsius, Boerhaave, Cardan, Fabricius, Serapion, Telesius, Paracelsus, and many more:—

*Paroles.* Why, 'tis the worst argument of wonder that will stand out in our latter times.

*Borron.* And so 'tis.

*Lefeur.* To be distinguished of the action.—

*Paroles.* So I say: both of Galen and Paracelsus.

*Lefeur.* Of all the learned and authentic fellows.—

*Paroles.* Right, so I say.—*All's Well, Act III. Sc. 2.*

Harvey's discovery, though supposed to have been made known at the College of Physicians as early as 1615, was first publicly announced in his published work on the subject, in 1619, three years after the death of Shakespeare. The plays from which Mr. Hackett cites his evidences were all written before 1610, and most of them several years earlier. It is quite possible that Bacon, however, may have heard something of Harvey's discovery, or even seen his book, before the publication of the Folio of 1623. So remarkable a fact should have awakened a profound interest in a mind like his; but there is no intimation in any of his writings that he was at all acquainted with this discovery. Nor is it probable that any author would have occasion to alter and adapt his poetical metaphors to the scientific niceties of the latest announcement.

Prior to Harvey, and as early as 1553, Michael Servetus of Geneva had discovered the flow of the blood from the right side of the heart, through valves opening towards the lungs, and from thence, through the pulmonary vein, to the left ventricle, whence he supposed it was diffused through the whole body; and Fabricius of Padua had discovered the valves in the veins opening towards the heart. Harvey was his pupil, about the year 1600, and from him learned the fact which first suggested the idea of the general circulation.<sup>1</sup> The most suggestive passage of all those cited from Shakespeare, in proof that he was in possession of the same idea, is that in which the ghost in "Hamlet" is made to say of "the blood of man," —

"That swift as quicksilver, it courses through  
The natural gates and alleys of the body";

and this appears in the first printed editions of the "Hamlet" (1603 and 1604), that of 1603 reading "posteth" instead of "courses"; but in the language and thought of all these passages, striking resemblances to the ideas, style, and diction of Sir Francis Bacon may be distinctly noted, as in these examples: —

<sup>1</sup> Craik's *Eng. Lit.*, II. 149.

— "make thick my blood,  
 Stop up the access and passage to remorse."  
*Macbeth, Act I. Sc. 5.*

"Why does my blood thus muster to my heart,  
 Making both it unable for itself,  
 And dispossessing all my other parts  
 Of necessary fitness?"  
*Measure for Measure, Act II. Sc. 4.*

"The tide of blood in me  
 Hath proudly flow'd in vanity till now:  
 Now doth it turn, and ebb back to the sea,  
 Where it shall mingle with the state of floods,  
 And flow henceforth in formal majesty."  
*2 Henry IV., Act V. Sc. 2.*

"Had bak'd thy blood, and made it heavy, thick,  
 (Which, else, runs tickling up and down the veins)."  
*King John, Act III. Sc. 3.*

— "my heart, . . .  
 The fountain from the which my current runs,  
 Or else dries up."— *Othello, Act IV. Sc. 2.*  
 Time hath not yet so dried this blood of mine."  
*Much Ado About Nothing, Act IV. Sc. 1.*

"The spring, the head, the fountain of your blood  
 Is stopp'd; the very source of it is stopp'd."  
*Macbeth, Act II. Sc. 1.*

"Lord Angelo is precise;  
 Stands at a guard with envy; scarce confesses  
 That his blood flows," — . . . . .  
 . . . . . — "a man whose blood  
 Is a very snow-broth."  
*Measure for Measure, Act I. Sc. 4, 5.*

"Runs not this speech like iron through your blood?"  
*Much Ado, Act V. Sc. 1.*

"I send it through the rivers of your blood,  
 Even to the court, the heart, to th' seat o' th' brain;  
 And through the cranks and offices of man,  
 The strongest nerves, and small inferior veins,  
 From me receive that natural competency  
 Whereby they live." — *Coriolanus, Act I. Sc. 1.*

"The second property of your excellent sherris is, the warming of the blood; which, before cold and settled, left the liver white and pale, . . . but the sherris warms it, and makes it course from the inwards to the parts



extreme . . . — and then the vital commoners and inland petty spirits muster me all to their captain, the heart." — 2 *Henry IV.*, Act IV. Sc. 3.

Now, the spring-head, the fountain, and the ebb and flow of the sea, are frequent sources of metaphor, both with Bacon and the plays; as, for instance, this from a letter to the king: "Let your Majesty's grace, in this my desire, stream down upon me, and let it be out of the fountain and spring-head, and '*ex mero motu*,' that, living or dying, the print of the goodness of King James may be in my heart."<sup>1</sup> In the "Advancement" (1605), we have the results of Bacon's general survey of the state of medical learning down to his own time, in which he says of the anatomists, that "they inquire not of the diversities of the parts, the secrecies of the passages, and the seats or nestlings of the humours, nor much of the footsteps and impressions of diseases." So, Shakespeare seems to consider the heart as a seat, or court, into which the blood musters, or nestles, as it courses up and down, through the secret accesses and passages, through "the cranks and offices of man," —

"The natural gates and alleys of the body."

'As to the diversity of parts,' he continues, "there is no doubt but the facture or framing of the inward parts is as full of differences as the outward; . . . As for the passages and pores, it is true, which was anciently noted, that the more subtle of them appear not in anatomies, because they are short and latent in dead bodies, though they be open and manifest in live; which being supposed, though the inhumanity of '*anatomia vivorum*' was by Celsus justly reproved, yet in regard of the great use of this observation, the inquiry needed not by him so slightly to have been relinquished altogether":<sup>2</sup>

"Laf. To be relinquished of the artists —

Par. So I say; both of Galen and Paracelsus."

<sup>1</sup> Letter of July 30, 1624, *Works* (Philad.) III. 24.

<sup>2</sup> *Adv. of Learn.*, *Works* (Philad.) I. 204-5.

So he writes: "I ever liked the Galenists, that deal with good compositions, and not the Paracelsians, that deal with these fine separations."<sup>1</sup> Again, he says: "In preparation of medicines, I do find strange, especially considering how *mineral medicines* have been extolled, and that they are safer for the outward than inward parts, that no man hath sought to make an imitation by art of natural baths and medicinable fountains"; and again, "while the life-blood of Spain went inward to the heart, the outward limbs and members trembled and could not resist."<sup>2</sup> The play says:—

"Death, having preyed upon the outward parts,  
Leaves them insensible."

Here we have the same general and vague notions as to the structure of these inward and extreme parts, with a kind of repetition of the favorite words in the "natural baths," "mineral medicines," and "medicinable fountains"; which may also call to mind these lines from the "Othello":—

—"the thought whereof  
Doth like a poisonous mineral gnaw my inwards."  
*Othello, Act II. Sc. 1.*

"Blood is stanch'd," he says again, "by drawing of the spirits and blood inwards; which is done by cold; as iron or a stone laid upon the neck doth stanch the bleeding of the nose." So, according to Falstaff, "the cold blood" of Prince Harry, which "he did naturally inherit of his father," was, by "drinking good, and good store of fertile sherris," become "very hot and valiant."

He speaks also of "the sudden recess of the spirits," and of "the recess of the blood by sympathy," and says, that "there is a fifth way also in use, to let blood in an adverse part for a revulsion."<sup>3</sup> This goes upon the idea of a flowing outward and a receding inward of the blood,

<sup>1</sup> Letter to Cecil, Spedding's *Let. and Life*, I. 356.

<sup>2</sup> Speech, Spedding's *Let. and Life*, II. 89.

<sup>3</sup> Nat. Hist., § 66.



a sort of "tickling up and down the veins"; and it is in exact keeping with Falstaff's notion of the effect of "sherris," that "warms the blood, which, before cold and settled, left the liver white and pale," as well as with the blood of Lord Angelo, which was "a very snow-broth." And here, also, in the iron laid upon the neck, that singular simile of a speech running "like iron through your blood," may find an explanation of its origin.

He continues: "But the cause is, for that all those diets do dry up humours, rheums, and the like: and they cannot dry up until they have first attenuated; and while the humour is attenuated, it is more fluid than it was before, and troubleth the body a great deal more until it be dried up and consumed." Here, we have a similar physiological idea as in the case of—

"The fountain from which my current runs,  
Or else dries up;" —

and probably, also, the source of the expression, —

"Time hath not yet so dried this blood of mine."

Dr. Bucknill assures us that "Shakespeare follows Hippocrates," and that he refers to a theory of that author, "that the veins, which were thought the only blood-vessels, had their origin in the liver. The Father of Medicine maintained that they came from the liver, the arteries from the heart"; and he adds, that "Rabelais expresses the doctrine of the function of the liver which is implied in Falstaff's disquisition," namely, "that the liver conveys blood through the veins for the good of the whole body." He cites further in support of his views these lines from the "Merchant of Venice": —

— "and let my liver rather heat with wine,  
Than my heart cool with mortifying groans."

His conclusion is, that Shakespeare believed, indeed, in the flow of the blood, "the rivers of your blood," which went even "to the court, the heart"; but he considered that it was the liver, and not the heart, which was the cause of

the flow"; but he does not find in Shakespeare "a trace of any knowledge of the circulation of the blood," in the sense of Harvey.<sup>1</sup>

Now, as to whether or not William Shakespeare ever read these authors, we have not the least information; but we certainly know that Francis Bacon made apothegms out of this same Rabelais, and that he had studied Hippocrates,<sup>2</sup> "the Father of the Art," as well as Galen, Paracelsus, and the rest. And he concludes a letter addressed to the Scottish physician, Dr. Morison, in 1603, on the coming in of King James, in these words: "So not doubting to see you here with his Majesty, considering that it belongeth to your art to feel pulses, and I assure you Galen doth not set down greater variety of pulses than do vent here in men's hearts";<sup>3</sup> and the mind of the author of the "Romeo and Juliet" (1595) must have been running upon the very subject of these investigations:—

— "through all thy veins shall run  
A cold and drowsy humour, which shall seize  
Each vital spirit; for no pulse shall keep  
His natural progress, but surcease to beat."

*Act IV, Sc. 1.*

And it may very well be taken here as one of those numerous and singular coincidences of thought and expression, which everywhere drop out in the works of Bacon and Shakespeare, and especially in those which were written at about the same date and upon kindred subjects, that the phrase applied to Celsus, "*the inquiry needed not by him so slightly to have been relinquished altogether,*" should reappear in his review of the labors of these same learned authors, and before that "rarest argument of wonder," which, in the play (written prior to 1594), was "*to be relinquished of the artists, . . . both of Galen and Paracelsus,*" and "*all the learned and authentic fellows,*" had as yet entirely passed out of his memory. Nor need there be any

<sup>1</sup> Hackett's *Notes*, 292.

<sup>2</sup> *Adv. of Learn.*

<sup>3</sup> Letter, *Works* (Philad.) III. 197.

wonder that the ideas, expressions, words, metaphors, and technical learning of the two writings, in medicine as in law, and in many other branches of learning besides, should be so exactly alike, if we once conceive (what will be further demonstrated) that Francis Bacon was the author of both.

The German critic, Schlegel, equally amazed at the extent of the knowledge and the depth of the philosophy of these plays of Shakespeare, the author of which he could not but consider as one who had mastered "all the things and relations of this world," does not hesitate to declare the received account of his life to be "a mere fabulous story, a blind and extravagant error":<sup>1</sup> this Shakespeare must have been another sort of man from what we know him. The Germans seem to have been the first to discover and appreciate the full depth of his philosophy, not excepting Gerwinus, who appears to have had less difficulty about the author himself. That a single passage, which had never attracted the particular attention of an English critic, otherwise than as a brilliant figure of speech, should be capable of creating whole books in the soul of Jean Paul Richter, is, perhaps, not much to be wondered at; especially, if we consider that he, to whose great learning, deep philosophy, and divine vision, this universe became crystalline and transparent, did not fail to see that no one had "better pursued and illumined the actual truth of things, even into the deepest vales and the little worms therein, than those twin-stars of poesy, Homer and Shakespeare."<sup>2</sup>

Indeed, the bare proposition, that this man, on his arrival in London, at the age of twenty-three, with only such a history as we possess of his previous life, education, studies, and pursuits, could have begun almost immediately to produce the matchless works which we know by his name, not

<sup>1</sup> *Lectures on Dram. Lit.*, by A. W. Schlegel, Tr. by John Black, (Philad 1833,) p. 289.

<sup>2</sup> *Vorschule der Aesthetik, Werke*, I. 25.



merely the most masterly works of art, and as such in the opinion of eminent critics, surpassing the Greek tragedy itself, but classical poems, and plays the most profoundly philosophical in the English language, or any other (for no less a critic than Goethe has awarded this high praise), may justly strike us in the outset as simply preposterous and absurd. "What!" exclaims Coleridge, at this consequence of the traditional biography, "are we to have miracles in sport? . . . Does God choose idiots by whom to convey divine truths to man?"<sup>1</sup> Emerson, no less, considering that the Shakespeare Society had ascertained that this William Shakespeare was "a good-natured sort of man, a jovial actor, manager, and shareholder, not in any striking manner distinguished from other actors and managers," and that he was "a veritable farmer" withal, engaged in all sorts of traffic at Stratford, doing business commissions in London, and suing Philip Rogers for malt delivered, while writing a "Hamlet," or a "Lear," is apparently obliged to lay down the problem in despair, with this significant confession: "I cannot marry this fact to his verse. Other admirable men have led lives in some sort of keeping with their thought; but this man, in wide contrast."<sup>2</sup> In like manner, Jean Paul Richter "would have him buried, if his life were like his writings, with Pythagoras, Plato, Socrates, and the highest nobility of the human race, in the same best consecrated earth of our globe, God's flower-garden in the deep North."<sup>3</sup> Indeed, considering how this man should drop the theatre as an idle pastime, or as a trade that had filled his coffers, and should quietly sit him down for the remainder of life merely to talk and jest with the Stratford burghers, and, turning over his works to the spoiling hand of blundering printers and surreptitious traffic, regardless of his own reputation, heedless of the world around him, leaving his manuscripts to perish, taking

<sup>1</sup> *Notes on Shakes., Works*, IV. 56.

<sup>2</sup> *Rep. Men*, 215.

<sup>3</sup> *Werke*, I. 241.

no thought of foreign nations, or the next ages, or as if not deeming he had written anything worthy of preservation, should "steal in silence to his grave,"<sup>1</sup> beneath a doggerel epitaph reputed to have been written by himself, and certainly suitable enough for his "bones," by the side of which the knowing friends who erected a monument over him caused to be inscribed a Latin memento, which might indeed do honor to the memory of the "Star of Poets":—

"Judicio Pylium, genio Socratem, arte Maronem,  
Terra tegit, populus mœret, Olympus habet";—

any man might wonder, if he did not laugh outright, to see this Son of Momus wearing thus his lion's skin even in his tomb. Carlyle, that other master-critic of our time, chewing the cud of this "careless mortal, open to the Universe and its influences, not caring strenuously to open himself; who, Prometheus-like, will scale Heaven (if it so must be), and is satisfied if he therewith pay the rent of his London Play-house," as it were, with the imperturbability of Teufelsdröckh himself, simply breaks out, at last, with this brief exclamation: "An unparalleled mortal."<sup>2</sup>

#### § 5. HIS STUDIES.

There is no evidence on record other than that which is drawn from the works themselves, that during his connection with the theatre in London, he was given to profound studies or much reading; and it is evident that no man in his circumstances, conditions, and daily occupations, could have found time, means, and facilities, not merely for supplying the known deficiencies of his previous education, but to make extensive and thorough acquisitions in all departments of human knowledge, and, at the same time, to carry on the work of inventing and writing these extraordinary compositions. If it were to be admitted that he was in fact the author of them, then of course, all the rest should be

<sup>1</sup> *Mem. of the Court of James I.*, by Lucy Aiken.

<sup>2</sup> *Essays* (Boston, 1861), III. 211.



presumed, however miraculous and incredible. There are no certain proofs that he enjoyed the intimacy of literary associates beyond the purlieus of the theatre and certain small writers for the stage, Ben Jonson only excepted. Some of his earlier contemporaries, like Greene, made various attacks upon him, significantly hinting at the incongruity between him and his supposed productions; though numerous other writers and poets of later dates, following the general report, unquestionably recognized him as the admitted author of the works which were attributed to him. He certainly had the acquaintance and friendship of Ben Jonson, who was famous among the literary men of his time, received the countenance of the Court, and enjoyed the intimacy and favor of high literary characters, and particularly of Lord Bacon, in whose service he was engaged for some years. Ben Jonson did not fail to discover "the Star of Poets" in these works; but his description of the person, qualities, genius, and individual characteristics of William Shakespeare, not to speak of his criticisms upon him and the players, do not help to remove the manifest contradiction that exists between the man and the works. The traditions of his having been a member of Raleigh's Club, and his wit-combats at the "Mermaid" (some books say "wet-combats") with Ben Jonson and the assembled wits, will not bear the test of critical examination: they rest, at last, on mere inference from the supposed relations, character, and genius of such an author, and are as baseless in reality as the conceit of worthy old Fuller, proceeding upon the indubitable fact that "his learning was very little," and the old saw, "*Poeta non fit sed nascitur*," that "as Cornish diamonds are not polished by any lapidary, but are pointed and smoothed even as they are taken out of the earth, so Nature itself was all the art that was used upon him."<sup>1</sup> It was a shrewd conjecture of Dr. Magian, that the reason why we know so little of him is, that "when his

<sup>1</sup> *Worthies of England*, III. 284.

business was over at the theatre, he did not mix with his fellow-actors, but stepped into his boat, and rowed up to Whitehall, there to spend his time with the Earl of Southampton and the gentlemen about the Court."<sup>1</sup> There may be some truth in this suggestion; but it will be necessary also to suppose an invisible boat and a further passage to Gray's Inn.

If these plays had not begun to appear for a period of ten years or so after William Shakespeare came to London, it might be possible to imagine, that, even in his employments, he might have found time and means to prosecute to some extent those studies which every reasonable mind must acknowledge to have been absolutely necessary in order to fit the most luminous natural genius for the writing of these dramas. But there was no such period: the plays began to appear at least as early as the year 1588, even if it be not satisfactorily proved, that the first sketches of several of them had been upon the stage for some years previous to that date, and before Shakespeare arrived in London. There were six years after this event in which the two principal poems may have been written, and before he was twenty-nine years of age. Doubtless, many poems of great merit have been produced at an earlier age than this: nothing need be objected on the score of age merely. Nor would it be anything remarkable that an actor should correct and amend, or even write or rewrite plays. Heming, or Condell, may have done as much as this. In fact, some plays were written by other actors and members of this same company; but they appear to have been no better than such authors might reasonably be expected to produce, and they speedily passed into oblivion. It might be admitted that William Shakespeare may have altered, amended, or rewritten, old plays to adapt them to his stage, without danger to the question of this authorship. The greater plays, it is true, were not produced until more than

<sup>1</sup> *Shakes. Papers* (New York, 1856), p. 10.

ten years had elapsed. Of course, any author should be expected to grow in this time; but there is exhibited in the character and succession of these works, an order of growth quite other than any that can be ascribed to a mortal man with the personal history which must be assigned to William Shakespeare; ascending, as it does, from the very gates of the university, upward and upward, into the highest spheres of human thought and culture.

#### § 6. EARLY PLAYS.

Critical researches have demonstrated that this author gathered his materials from any quarry that was at hand, suitable to his purposes. Old ballads, poems, plays, novels, tales, histories, in English, French, Italian, Latin, or Greek, translated or untransluted, were made to yield their treasures of fact and fable. There had been an old play of "King John" in the reign of Edward VI. Some critics think that the "Troublesome Reign of King John," printed in 1591, and written in two parts, was an early work of this author, and the foundation of the "King John" of the *Folio* of 1623; but later writers, no doubt correctly, have attributed it to Marlowe, Greene, or Peele, or some other poet, though it was reprinted in 1611, and in 1622, with the initials "W. Sh." on the title-page; doubtless a trick of the booksellers to make it sell. The "King John" of Shakespeare is first mentioned by Meres in 1598; it was first printed in the *Folio*; and, in the absence of any other data than the style and manner of the composition, on which to fix the date of its production, Mr. White places it in the year 1596, while admitting that the author must have had the older play before him, or in his head, when this was written,<sup>1</sup> and that the date of it may go back to 1591. The old play called the "Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth," which was acted on the stage prior to 1598, after having undergone a marvellous transformation, seems to

<sup>1</sup> White's *Index*, VI. 12.



have grown into the two parts of the "Henry IV." and the "Henry V."<sup>1</sup> The second and third parts of the "Henry VI." were first known by wholly different titles, and, according to Malone, before Shakespeare appeared in London, and certainly as early as 1587-8. These also have been attributed by some critics to Marlowe, and by Mr. White to Marlowe, Greene, and Peele, in conjunction with Shakespeare;<sup>2</sup> and the first part of the "Henry VI.," never printed until it appeared in the Folio, the "Taming of the Shrew," and the "Titus Andronicus," have been placed in the same category by him, though beyond question they will have to be assigned to this author; and Malone believed them all to have been upon the stage at an earlier date than 1587. Mr. White concludes, however, that Shakespeare, in his subsequent revisions of these joint works, merely reclaimed his own. That the rejected passages were inferior to the parts retained, or rewritten, and not above the powers of Marlowe, Greene, or Peele, may safely enough be admitted; nor should it be at all surprising that these earliest efforts of a young author should be found to be somewhat inferior to his later works. The use in them of a single idiom which was then growing obsolete, and which more frequently occurs in Greene than in any of his contemporaries, but which was not often used, or was carefully eliminated by this author, together with some near equality of weight, rhythm, and style, may be allowed to have some consideration; but this same idiom, on which so much stress is laid as an ear-mark of Greene, is found, five times, within twenty lines of one of Bacon's translations of the Psalms,<sup>3</sup> and occasionally, though not often, in the plays, as thus:—

"You may as well  
 Forbid the sea for to obey the moon";—  
*Winter's Tale, Act I. Sc. 2.*

<sup>1</sup> Knight's *Studies of Shakes.*

<sup>2</sup> *Essay* on the "Henry VI.," White's *Shakes.*, VII.

<sup>3</sup> Psalm civ.



and the whole argument would seem to be a weak foundation for so large a theory; especially, if these plays be considered as the first attempt of a young writer, and produced probably somewhere between 1582 and 1589. Mr. White believes that men have been hung on less evidence than that which he produces. It is indeed very formidable; and it might carry the jury in the absence of better testimony; it is nevertheless quite certain that men have been hung on proofs that seemed equally clear, who afterwards turned out to be innocent.

The "Timon of Athens" has been supposed to have been founded, in some part, upon an older play of that name; but the old play of "Timon," in manuscript, and apparently written by "a scholar," which was thought by Steevens to have been transcribed about the year 1600, and which came into the hands of Mr. Dyce, according to the opinion of Mr. Knight and other critics, was evidently never written by Shakespeare at all. Even in the face of facts like these, Malone could not persuade himself that Shakespeare could have begun to write before the year 1590; nor Mr. Collier, that he could have had any reputation as an author before 1593. They suppose these older plays to have been written by other authors, and that they were only retouched by Shakespeare. Whether they were the work of this author, or another, it is certain, at least, that they were afterwards taken up by him, and carefully elaborated into the plays which we now have. The "Timon of Athens" of Shakespeare was, doubtless, an original work of a much later date.

A cloud of obscurity hangs over the origin and early history of these older plays. These conclusions would seem to be sufficiently well warranted by the facts which we know: first, that some of these old plays were original first draughts of this author, and that some of them may have been based upon older plays of other authors; and second, that, in either case, they were already upon the stage at the

date usually assigned for the arrival of William Shakespeare in London. But, as that date is not quite certain, and as it is not impossible that he may have sent plays to the theatre before that event, nothing more definite can be positively asserted than this, that, as Francis Bacon was by some three years the elder of the two, and had been snugly ensconced in Gray's Inn since 1579, with the aroma of a scholar of Trinity and the airs of the French Court still about him, it is at least more probable, in the first instance, that he should have been the author than the other.

The "Hamlet" has been another of these enigmas. The first certain knowledge that we have of this play is, that it was performed at the Globe as early as 1602, having been entered, in July of that year, upon the Register of the Stationers' Company, as "lately acted by the Lord Chamberlain's Servants." We may safely accept the conclusion of Mr. White,<sup>1</sup> that there was an older play of this name by another author, which was upon the stage in London prior to this date. It is mentioned in Henslowe's "Diary" in 1594. It was no doubt this older play that was alluded to, in 1596, by Dr. Lodge, who speaks of the ghost that cried in the theatre, "Hamlet, revenge!" It is believed by White, Knight, and other critics, to have been the same play that was referred to, in 1589, by Nash, who says, "it is a common practice, now-a-days, amongst a shifting sort of companions that run through every art and thrive by none, to leave the trade of *Noverint*, whereto they were born, and busy themselves with the endeavours of art," and that "English Seneca, read by candle-light, . . . will afford you whole Hamlets; I should say handfuls of tragical speeches." In the "Hamlet" of Shakespeare, which was printed in 1604, we have these words:—

"Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light for the law of writ, and the liberty: these are the only men." <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> White's *Shakes.*, XI. 8-9.

<sup>2</sup> *Devonshire Hamlets*, (Lond. 1860), I. 41; II. 38.

But, as it is very probable that there was some trace of Seneca, also, in the older play of 1589, this allusion, in that of 1602, cannot be taken as any proof of its identity with the other. It is a curious circumstance, however, that, in the year 1593-4, we find Francis Bacon diligently engaged in reading Seneca, Ovid, Virgil, Horace's "Art Poetic," the "Proverbs," and the "Adagia" of Erasmus, and taking notes; and, in 1595-6, he quotes Seneca, thus: "For it is Seneca's rule, *multum non multa*."<sup>1</sup> And in several of the earlier plays may be found very distinct traces of this classical reading, in the form of allusions, imitations, and quotations; as for instance, in the "Titus Andronicus," in which the story of Tereus and Philomela is worked into the texture of the tragedy out of Ovid's "Metamorphoses," together with quotations of whole lines of Latin verse out of Horace. In the "Love's Labor's Lost," we have quotations from Virgil, Horace, and Ovid, an irrepressible sprinkling of Latin erudition, with a pretty copious inter-spersion of sonnets and rhymed verse; and the whole play exhibits unmistakable impressions of the author's late residence at the French Court. In the "Taming of the Shrew," written before 1594, the author has already begun to add to his studies of the poets "that part of philosophy" which treats

— "of happiness  
By virtue 'specially to be achieved,"

and to mingle Aristotle with Ovid:—

" *Tranio. Mi perdonate, gentle master mine,*  
I am in all affected as yourself;  
Glad that you thus continue your resolve  
To suck the sweets of sweet philosophy.  
Only, good master, while we do admire  
This virtue, and this moral discipline,  
Let's be no stoics, nor no stocks, I pray,  
Or so devote to Aristotle's checks,  
As Ovid be an outcast quite abjured:  
Balk logic with acquaintance that you have,

<sup>1</sup> Advice to Greville; *Life and Letters*, by Spedding, II. 23.



And practice rhetoric in your common talk;  
 Music and poetry use to quicken you;  
 The mathematics, and the metaphysics,  
 Fall to them as you find your stomach serves you;  
 No profit grows where is no pleasure ta'en; —  
 In brief, sir, study what you most affect."

*Act I. Sc. 1.*

Lord Campbell,<sup>1</sup> assuming that the "Hamlet" alluded to by Nash was the play of Shakespeare, endeavors to draw an argument from Nash's fling at the trade of *Noverint* (that of the lawyers) in support of the position that William Shakespeare himself was considered as one of those who had abandoned that profession. We know from contemporaneous history that it was not an uncommon thing, in those days, for members of the Inns of Court to be writing for the stage, and it is scarcely to be doubted that there was then in fact a class of persons answering perfectly well to this description of Nash. But the inference, first, that Nash alluded to Shakespeare, and second, that Shakespeare had been a student at law at Stratford, finds little warrant here, or elsewhere, beyond the irresistible evidence, contained in the plays themselves, that their author was a lawyer. No more is it to be inferred that Francis Bacon was the person intended, though he was at that time Reader, and for seven years had been an utter barrister, of Gray's Inn. Whether the play were the same or not, it is plain that Nash supposed it to have been written by a lawyer.

This epistle of Nash had been appended to the "Menaphon" of Robert Greene, who had been employed as a writer for the stage; and Lord Campbell conjectures that the two friends, Nash and Greene, had been superseded by the appearance of a rival in the business, and thence, that this attack was aimed at William Shakespeare, as that other more express libel, which was contained in the "Groat's Worth of Wit," written by this same Greene, and published by Henry Chettle, in 1592, undoubtedly was. In this last, Greene addresses himself to his "Quondam

<sup>1</sup> *Shakes. Legal Acquirements*, 30-36



acquaintance that spend their wits in making Plays," and says, "Base-minded men, all three of you [Marlowe, Lodge, and Peele?], if by my misery yee bee not warned: for unto none of you (like me) sought these bars to cleave: those Puppets (I mean) that speake from our mouths, those Anticks garnisht in our colours. Is it not strange that I, to whome they all have bin beholding, is it not like that you, to whom they all have bin beholding, shall (were yee in that case that I am now) be both of them at once forsaken? Yes, trust them not; for there is an upstart crow beautified with our feathers, that with his *Tygres heart, wrapt in a players hyde*, supposes hee is as well able to bombast out a blank verse as the best of you; and beeing an absolute *Johannes factotum*, is, in his owne conceyt, the only Shake-scene in a countrey. Oh, that I might intreat your rare wittes to bee employed in more profitable courses, and let these apes imitate your past excellence, and never more acqaynte them with your admyred inventions."<sup>1</sup> This passage would seem to carry a direct insinuation that William Shakespeare, a mere actor, antic, and ape, was undertaking to shine in borrowed feathers, or it may mean no more than that he was, in Greene's estimation, an upstart player that had presumed to usurp the writer's calling. Mr. White has noticed that it contains a sort of parody on the following line of the third part of the "Henry VI.":—

"O Tiger's heart wrapp'd in a woman's hide!"<sup>2</sup>

Whence it would appear that Greene had that very play in mind: nothing more need be inferred, however, than that plays had begun to appear upon the stage, which, so far as known to these writers, were attributed to Shakespeare; came through his hands, perhaps, and from a source otherwise unknown to them; and that if they really took him to be the author (as it seems they did), they were unwilling to recognize him as one worthy to be admitted into their

<sup>1</sup> Halliwell's *Life of Shakes.*, 144.

<sup>2</sup> Act I. Sc. 4; White's *Shakes.*, VII. 411.

fraternity. Mr. White argues further, with much skill, that Greene meant to charge Shakespeare with plagiarism, also, from the rival poets, and cites as evidence of this hypothesis a sonnet from "Greene's Funerals by R. B. Gent" (1594), which says of Greene:—

"Nay more, the men that so eclips'd his fame,  
Purloyn'd his Plumes, can they deny the same?"

But this is a general charge, aimed at more than one, and not particularly at Shakespeare. The apology of Chettle, however, makes it clear, that in the above passage from Greene, a sneer was aimed especially at him in respect of his supposed authorship; for it says: "I am as sorry as if the originall fault had beene my fault, because my selfe have seene his demeanor no less civill than he excellent in the qualitie he professes; besides, divers of worship have reported his uprightness of dealing which argues his honesty, and his facetious grace in writing that approoves his art." Now, whether these "divers of worship" were some great persons about the Court, who had taken Shakespeare under their especial protection, or were merely some respectable acquaintances who had certified to his merit and character, must be left to conjecture. Mr. White appeals to these passages in further proof of his theory, that Marlowe, Greene, and Peele, wrote some plays in conjunction with Shakespeare, and that Shakespeare, in resuming his own, had in some degree appropriated their labors, and purloined their plumes; and he certainly makes a very plausible case of it. But it implies the assumption, both that William Shakespeare, in conjunction with those writers, in fact wrote the original draughts of those plays, and that it was he who afterwards re-wrote and completed them; and against these assumptions, the whole mass of evidence to be presented herein must stand arrayed; for it would be idle to imagine that Francis Bacon ever wrote a play in conjunction with either of them.

On the supposition that these plays came from Gray's

Inn, and were the earlier attempts of a briefless young barrister, who did not desire to be known as a writer for the stage, and who meant to "profess not to be a poet,"<sup>1</sup> but to whom any "lease of quick revenue"<sup>2</sup> might not be unacceptable, and some cover a practical necessity, it is not difficult to imagine, that this "absolute *Johannes factotum*" would be just the man to suit his purpose; nor is it necessary to suppose that an express bargain was struck in terms between them, in the first instance, but rather that the arrangement came about gradually in the course of time and the actual progress of events. Nor would it be a matter of wonder that his sudden pretensions to dramatic authorship should be sneered at by a rival who saw himself completely outdone (as he would suppose) by a mere under-actor, a puppet, an antic, and an ape. And when secret relations of this kind had once come to be established between the parties, the scheme of introducing to the public the two larger poems, a few years later, under the disguise of a dedication in his name as a closer cover for the real author, may have been the more practicable. How this was possible with so eminent a person as the Earl of Southampton, will be further considered hereinafter; observing, now, that Southampton was an intimate associate of the Earl of Essex, and of Francis Bacon, Essex's friend and counsellor, at this very time, and that there is not the least allusion to William Shakespeare in all the writings of Bacon, though, as we know from direct history, he was an intimate friend and patron of Ben Jonson, was a friend and admirer of George Herbert and other poets of the time, was familiar with the Greek and Latin poets, was an admirable orator and wit, was "a poetic imaginater," a lover and student of poetry, and himself a poet.

Prior to the date of these dedications (1593-4), the name of William Shakespeare had not appeared on the title-page of any printed play. It is not until 1598 that his name

<sup>1</sup> Bacon's *Apology concerning Essex*.

<sup>2</sup> Letter of Bacon.



begins to be printed on the title-page of the quartos. The author was not named on the title-page of the first printed editions of the "Richard II.," the "Richard III.," and the "Romeo and Juliet," in 1597; nor on that of the first part of the "Henry IV.," printed in 1598, nor on that of the "Henry V.," first printed in 1600. The "Love's Labor's Lost," "newly corrected and augmented," and the second editions of the "Richard II." and the "Richard III.," that were printed in 1598, bore the name of Shakespeare on the title-page; and so did the sonnets and poems collected and published by Jaggard, in 1599, under the title of the "Passionate Pilgrim." But, after this date, the quartos appear, in most instances, at least, as "written," or as "newly corrected and augmented," or "newly set forth and overseene," by William Shakespeare. It is in 1598 that Meres, in the "Wit's Treasury," names "the mellifluous and honey-tongued Shakespeare," in whom "the sweete witty soul of Ovid lives," as "witness his 'Venus and Adonis,' his 'Lucrece,' and his 'sugred sonnets' among his private friends"; and he mentions the "Gentlemen of Verona," the "Errors," the "Love's Labor's Lost," the "Love's Labor's Wonne," the "Midsummer's Night Dreame," the "Merchant of Venice," the "Richard II.," the "Richard III.," the "Henry IV.," the "King John," the "Titus Andronicus," and the "Romeo and Juliet." Of all the pieces named by Meres, the two poems only had been printed under the name of Shakespeare before that year. And it is in 1599 that Weever writes:—

"Honie-tongued Shakespeare, when I saw thine issue,  
I swore Apollo got them, and none other";

but he speaks only of the "fire hot Venus," the "chaste Lucretia," and

"Romeo, Richard, more whose names I know not."<sup>1</sup>

In 1594, Willobie's "Avisa" alludes to the Rape of Lucrece:—

<sup>1</sup> *Life*, by Halliwell, 189.



" Yet Tarquyne pluct his glistering grape,  
And Shakespeare paints poor Lucrece rape."

In the margin of the "Polimanteia" (1595), we find these words: "All praise, Lucretia — sweet Shakespeare." And soon after the death of Elizabeth, in 1603, this same Chettle, silenced before, but evidently by no means satisfied, noticing that, among many tributes to the virtues of the late Queen, none came from William Shakespeare, ventured to break out anew in these lines: —

" Nor doth the silver-tongued Melicert  
Drop from his honied muse one sable tear,  
To mourn her death that graced his desert,  
And to his laies open'd her royall eare:  
Shepherd, remember our Elizabeth,  
And sing her rape, done by that Tarquin, Death."<sup>1</sup>

But down to the year 1598, nothing definite anywhere appears, except these dedications to Southampton, and these allusions which followed them, on which to base the claim of this authorship for William Shakespeare, beyond the bare fact that the plays were upon the stage in the theatres with which he was connected, and were generally attributed to him. He had already become a principal sharer and manager, had purchased New Place at Stratford-on-Avon, and was able to loan money to his friends. His wealth had been derived from the theatres of his company, and his success was due, in no small degree, perhaps, to the superior excellence of these plays. After this dedication of the poems under his name, an indiscriminating public might be very well warranted in taking him to be the author of the plays also. If the plays came to the theatre through his hands, his fellow-actors would, of course, presume that he was himself the author of them, however much they might wonder that he never blotted out a line. They had to be attributed to somebody, and William Shakespeare does not appear to have declined the honor of their paternity. Greene might sneer, Nash insin

<sup>1</sup> *Mourning Garment*, 1603.

uate, and Ben Jonson criticize ; but he was under the protection of "divers of worship," and his reputation soon became established among the printers. It was Shakespeare's theatre, and naturally enough they were Shakespeare's plays.

As to the sonnets, it is by no means improbable that a reputation might arise in a similar manner. We know that in that age, when the art of printing had not as yet entirely superseded the circulation of manuscript copies, it was a common thing for various writings to be passing about from hand to hand in manuscript. Says John Florio, who translated Montaigne's *Essays* in 1600, and was tutor to Prince Charles, and must have known something of Shakespeare, and was doubtless well acquainted with Francis Bacon, in his preface to the "*World of Words*," printed in 1598: "There is another sort of leering crows that rather snarl than bite, whereof I could instance in one, who, lighting on a good sonnet of a gentleman's, a friend of mine, that loved better to be a poet than to be counted so, called the author a rhymmer." This may not have been Francis Bacon, but we know that Bacon wrote sonnets: some of them were addressed to the Queen, and were "commended by the great." Sir Philip Sidney had written sonnets. Sir Walter Raleigh wrote sonnets. Thomas Carew, a gentleman of the Bedchamber under Charles I., was a noted writer of sonnets. It was probably not an uncommon thing for manuscript sonnets to be circulating among great persons at this time. Indeed, we positively know that Bacon's sonnets and essays did pass from hand to hand, in that manner. The researches of Mr. Hepworth Dixon have ascertained the fact, that "a few essays, a few Religious Meditations, with some other short pieces of his composition, were passing, as Shakespeare's sugared sonnets and Raleigh's fugitive verses were at the same time passing, from hand to hand ; but a rogue of a printer being about to publish these scraps, their author, in fear of imperfect copies, put them with his own

hands to the press."<sup>1</sup> And thus the first edition of the Essays came to be printed, under Bacon's own hand, in 1597. In 1599, Jaggard, printer of several editions of the Essays between 1606 and 1624, had somehow come into possession of a collection of sonnets and smaller poems, which he published under the name of William Shakespeare; and in 1609, a larger collection was dedicated to "Mr. W. B., the only begetter of them," (on whom is invoked by the printer's preface "all happiness and that Eternity promised by our ever-living poet"), believed by Mr. Collier, no doubt correctly, to have been William Herbert, son of Henry, Earl of Pembroke and his celebrated Countess,

"Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother;"

who succeeded to the earldom in 1601, at the age of twenty-one, and was himself a poet, a writer of sonnets, and "a great patron of learning;"<sup>2</sup> was an associate of Essex and Southampton, and is said to have been a rival, with Bacon and Coke, for the hand of the rich widow Hatton; and was a friend of Bacon, a witness to his patent of peerage, and one of that "incomparable pair of brethren," to whom was dedicated the Folio of 1623; for, these plays, also, the author himself would take care to see published in authentic form, though in this instance under the name of another; for he had determined not to be known as a poet; yet, as he himself said of the first edition of the Essays, in the Epistle Dedicatory to his brother Anthony,<sup>3</sup> "like some that have an orchard ill-neighbour'd, that gather their fruit before it is ripe to prevent stealing," or rather, as we may suppose, in the case of the plays, to preserve the ripe fruit and prevent it from being corrupted by stolen and mangled copies, or from being by mere neglect wholly lost to the world. And this epistle con-

<sup>1</sup> *Story of Lord Bacon's Life*, by W. Hepworth Dixon. London, 1862. p. 114.

<sup>2</sup> Wood's *Athen. Oxon.* II. 483; I. 321.

<sup>3</sup> *Works*, (Boston,) XII. 289.



cerning the Essays may throw still further light on the whole subject, proceeding thus:—

“These fragments of my conceits were going to print: to labour the stay of them had been troublesome, and subject to interpretation; to let them pass had been to adventure the wrong they might receive by untrue copies, or by some garnishment, which it might please any that should set them forth to bestow upon them. Therefore I held it best discretion to publish them myself, as they passed long ago from my pen, without any further disgrace, than the weakness of the author. And as I did ever hold, there might be as great a vanity in retiring and withdrawing men’s conceits (except they be of some nature) from the world, as in obtruding them: so in these particulars I have played myself the Inquisitor, and find nothing to my understanding in them contrary or infectious to the state of Religion, or manners, but rather (as I suppose) medicinal. Only I disliked now to put them out because they will be like the late new half-pence, which though the Silver were good, yet the pieces were small. But since they would not stay with their Master, but would needs travel abroad, I have preferred them to you that are next to myself, dedicating them, such as they are, to our love, in the depth whereof (I assure you) I sometimes wish your infirmities translated upon myself, that her Majesty might have the service of so active and able a mind, and I might be with excuse confined to these contemplations and studies for which I am fittest.”

And the circumstances under which the “Troilus and Cressida,” that “remarkable and singular production,” as it is styled by Mr. Verplanck, first made its appearance, in 1609, are worthy of note in this connection. It appears that an older play of this name, perhaps an earlier sketch of this very one (as Mr. Verplanck seems to think, though there is much reason to believe it was by another author altogether), had been entered upon the Stationers’ Regis-



ter in 1602-3, but never printed; but before 1609, it must have been greatly enlarged and improved (if indeed this were not wholly a new play) in the most matured style of this master; and it was first presented before the King's Majesty at Court, in that year, and thence sent directly to the printer, and was printed with a preface, and with the name of William Shakespeare on the title-page, before it had ever appeared at the theatre.<sup>1</sup> The printer's preface (and, of course, the printer would expect the author himself to furnish the preface as well then as now) announces it thus:—

"A never writer to an ever reader.

#### NEWES.

Eternall reader [a "never writer" must have meant one never known to the public as a writer of plays, and could not well be William Shakespeare himself who was writing so much for the ever-reading public], you have heere a new play never stal'd with the stage, never clapper-clawed with the palmes of the vulger, and yet passing full of the palme comicall; for it is a birth of your braine, that never undertooke any thing comicall vainely: and were but the vaine names of commedies changde for the titles of commodities, or of playes for pleas [mind still running on pleas], you should see all those grand censors, that now stile them such vanities, flock to them for the main grace of their gravities ["we cannot but know their dignity greater, than to descend to the reading of these trifles," says the Dedication to the Folio, and "I have done with such vanities," says Bacon, in answer to a summons to the House of Lords, some time afterwards]; especially this author's commedies, that are so fram'd to the life. ["*Painter*. It is a pretty mocking of the life;"<sup>2</sup> and says Bacon, "I must do contrary to that that painters do;

<sup>1</sup> White's *Shakes.*, IX. 1-16; *Papers of the Shakes.* Sec., III. 79. London

<sup>2</sup> *Timon of Athens*, Act I. Sc. 1.

for they desire to make the picture to the life, and I must endeavour to make the life to the picture,"<sup>1</sup>] that they serve for the most common commentaries of all the actions of our lives, showing such a dexteritie, and power of witte, that the most displeased with playes are pleased with his commedies, [says Bacon's letter to the King (1621), "Cardinal Wolsey said that if he had pleased God as he pleased the King, he had not been ruined. My conscience saith no such thing; for I know not but in serving you, I served God in one. But it may be if I had pleased God, as I had pleased you, it would have been better for me"]. . . . So much and such savord salt of witte is in his commedies, that they seem (for their height of pleasure ["it hath been the height of our care," says the Dedication again]) to be borne in that sea that brought forth *Venus*. Amongst all there is none more witty than this; and had I time, I would comment upon it, though I know it needs not, (for so much as will make you thinke your testern well bestow'd,) but for so much worth, as even poore I know to be stuff in it [certainly there can be no doubt of that, your worship.] It deserves such a labour, as well as the best commedy in *Terence* or *Plautus*: and believe this, that when hee is gone, and his commedies out of sale, you will scramble for them, and set up a new *English* inquisition [some twelve years before, the Dedictory Epistle to the Essays had said, "so in these particulars I have played myself the Inquisitor"]. Take this for a warning, and at the perill of your pleasures losse, and judgments, refuse not, nor like this the lesse for not being sullied with the smoaky breath of the multitude; but thanke fortune for the 'scape it hath made amongst you. Since by the grand possessors' wills, I believe, you should have prayd for them, rather than beene prayd. And so I 'eave all such to bee prayd for (for the states of their wits healths) that will not praise it. — *Vale*."

<sup>1</sup> *Letter*, 1619.

It is positively asserted here, that the play was a new one, and that it had never been upon the stage, nor been sullied with the smoky breath of the multitude. The writer must have known this. It was first produced at Court, and was no doubt addressed rather to the refined and learned personages that would be there assembled to hear it, than to the unlettered multitude; and these being "the grand possessors," and the play being such as he knew it to be, he did not hesitate to tell the public, that they might be thankful that they ever got it at all, and, if they knew what was good for themselves, they should rather pray to have it than be prayed to take it; and this is as true to-day as it was then; for as we know, it seldom appears upon the public stage, though full of the loftiest wisdom.

But very soon after it was printed, it found its way to the theatre, and shortly after it had appeared upon the stage, and in the same year, a second edition was issued from the same type, only suppressing this preface, and announcing the play on the title-page "as it was acted by the King's Majesty's Servants at the Globe: Written by William Shakespeare." It had now come to be a Shakespeare's play. From this significant allusion to the "grand possessors' wills," both Tieck and Knight have inferred that the manuscript came from the possession, or control, either of the King himself, or of some great personage about the Court, and that Shakespeare had written this "wonderful comedy" for that person and for the use of the revels at Court, and not for the public stage; an inference, which would seem to carry upon its face the appearance of a forced construction. In view of all that will be offered herein touching the question of this authorship, it may appear more probable, and these very facts may give us some intimation, that the great personage in question was himself the author of the play, being no other (as it will be shown) than Sir Francis Bacon, then lately become Solicitor-General. At least, not inconsistent with



this conclusion, is Mr. Verplanck's excellent appreciation of the play itself, in these words:—

"Its beauties are of the highest order. It contains passages fraught with moral truth and political wisdom—high truths, in large and philosophical discourse, such as remind us of the loftiest disquisitions of Hooker, or Jeremy Taylor, on the foundations of social law. Thus the comments of Ulysses (Act I. Sc. 3) on the universal obligation of the law of order and degree, and the confusion caused by rebellion to its rule, either in nature or in society, are in the very spirit of the grandest and most instructive eloquence of Burke. The piece abounds too in passages of the most profound and persuasive practical ethics, and grave advice for the government of life; as when in the third act, Ulysses (the great didactic organ of the play) impresses upon Achilles the consideration of man's ingratitude 'for good deeds past,' and the necessity of perseverance to 'keep honor bright.'"

And in further confirmation of this view, we find in this play one of those numerous instances of similarity, not to say identity, of thought and language, which, independent of extraneous circumstances, though not absolutely conclusive in themselves, are, nevertheless, scarcely less convincing than the most direct evidence when considered with all the rest; for, in the "Advancement of Learning," treating of moral culture, Bacon quotes Aristotle as saying, "that young men are no fit auditors of moral philosophy," because "they are not settled from the boiling heat of their affections, nor attempered with time and experience." And in the "Troilus and Cressida," we have the same thing in these lines:—

"Not much  
Unlike young men, whom Aristotle thought  
Unfit to hear moral philosophy."—*Act II. Sc. 2.*

Mr. Spedding notices that Aristotle speaks only of "political philosophy," and he observes that the error of Bacon, in



making him speak of "moral philosophy," had been followed by Shakespeare. The "Advancement" was published in 1605, and this appears to have been a new play in 1608, (if, indeed, that older play of 1602 were not a first sketch of the same piece,) and so, it is barely possible that William Shakespeare may have seen the "Advancement" before those lines were written. But the whole tenor of the argument in the play is so exactly in keeping with Bacon's manner and mode of dealing with the subject, that it is hard to believe a mere plagiarist would have followed him so profoundly. Bacon expresses the same opinions somewhat more fully in the *De Augmentis*, (published in 1623,) that "young men are less fit auditors of policy than of morals, until they have been thoroughly seasoned in religion and the doctrine of morals and duties; for, otherwise, the judgment is so depraved and corrupted that they are apt to think there are no true and solid moral differences of things, and they measure everything according to utility or success, as the poet says:—

"Prosperum et felix scelus virtus vocatur."<sup>1</sup>

Now, this is precisely the depraved judgment of young Paris, according to his speech in the play. He argued that it would be disgraceful to the Trojan leaders to give up Helen, "on terms of base compulsion": he

— "would have the soil of her fair rape  
Wip'd off in honorable keeping her."

To which Hector replies altogether too much in Bacon's own style, not to have participated in his studies:—

"Hect. Paris and Troilus, you have both said well;  
And on the cause and question now in hand  
Have glaz'd, — but superficially; not much  
Unlike young men, whom Aristotle thought  
Unfit to hear moral philosophy.  
The reasons you allege, do more conduce  
To the hot passion of distemper'd blood,  
Than to make up a free determination

<sup>1</sup> *De Aug. Lib. VII., Works* (Boston), III. 45

'Twixt right and wrong; for pleasure and revenge  
 Have ears more deaf than adders to the voice  
 Of any true decision. Nature craves  
 All dues be render'd to their owners: now,  
 What nearer debt in all humanity  
 Than wife is to the husband? if this law  
 Of nature be corrupted through affection,  
 And that great minds, of partial indulgence  
 To their benumbed wills, resist the same,  
 There is a law in each well-ordered nation,  
 To curb those raging appetites that are  
 Most disobedient and refractory.  
 If Helen, then, be wife to Sparta's king,—  
 As it is known she is,—these moral laws  
 Of nature and of nations speak aloud  
 To have her back return'd: thus to persist  
 In doing wrong extenuates not wrong,  
 But makes it much more heavy." — *Act II. Sc. 2.*

In addition to the similarity of idea in respect of the errors of young men as to the doctrine and foundation of morals, there is an outcropping of identical expression in such phrases as these: "*not settled from the boiling heat of their affections, nor attempered with time and experience,*" and "*to the hot passion of distemper'd blood*"; "*the judgment is so depraved and corrupted,*" and "*if this law of nature be corrupted through affection*"; "*no true and solid moral differences of things,*" and "*these moral laws of nature and of nations*"; "*the soil of her fair rape wip'd off in honorable keeping her,*" and "*scelus virtus vocatur*"; which are altogether too special, palpable, and peculiar, to be accidental, or to be due to any common usage of that or any age; and there would seem to be no room left for the possibility of a doubt as to the identity of the authorship.

#### § 7. DOUBTFUL PLAYS.

Not only these plays and poems, but six other plays, which did not appear in that Folio, and which have never been received into the genuine canon, were likewise published, in Shakespeare's lifetime, under his name, or initials, viz: the "Sir John Oldcastle" in 1600, the "London

Prodigal \* in 1605, the "Yorkshire Tragedy" in 1608, (and the "Pericles" in 1609,) under his name in full; and the "Locrine" in 1595, the "Thomas Lord Cromwell" in 1602, and the "Puritan, or Widow of Watling Street" in 1607, under the initials "W. S.," which some critics have taken to mean William Shakespeare, while others, with Malone, have agreed that they meant William Smith, and, with Pope, that Shakespeare never wrote a single line of them. These plays were in the possession of his theatre, and doubtless came into the hands of the printers in like manner with many of the others, which were in like manner reputed to be his. And not only these, but still another list was imputed to him, in his own time and afterwards, viz: the "Arraignment of Paris," the "Arden of Fever-sham," the "Edward III.," the "Birth of Merlin," the "Fair Em; the Miller's Daughter," and the "Mucedorus," as well as the "Merry Devil of Edmonton," acted at the Globe, and printed, in 1608, under the names of Shakespeare and Rowley, and the "Two Noble Kinsmen," printed after the death of Shakespeare under his name and that of Fletcher; most of which have been rejected by nearly all critics as not Shakespeare's.

Of the three that were published under his name in full, in his lifetime, there is scarcely any room to doubt that they were written by other authors. According to Malone, the "Sir John Oldcastle" was written by Munday, Drayton, Wilson, and Hathwaye. The first and second parts of it were entered in the books of the Stationers' Company, in 1600; the first part was printed in the name of William Shakespeare, in that year, as performed at Henslowe's theatre; and an entry in Henslowe's diary shows that, in 1599, he paid those authors for both parts; but the second part was never printed. Mr. Knight and other later critics concur in the judgment of Malone, that it is clearly not a play of Shakespeare.

The "Yorkshire Tragedy" was entered and printed in



1608; the event on which the story is founded did not happen until 1604; and although there may be no decisive reasons, grounded on internal evidence merely, why it may not have been a careless and hasty production of this author, it is difficult to believe that he could have produced such a play at about the same time that he was writing the "Hamlet," the "Lear," the "Macbeth," and the "Julius Cæsar." The best judges concur in rejecting it as not written by him.

The "London Prodigal" was published in 1605, as played by the "King's Majesty's Servants" of the Globe, and as written by William Shakespeare; but Malone, Knight, and White reject it altogether. And of the other three, while it appears that one of them, the "Lord Cromwell," was performed by his company, the evidence is still more satisfactory, that they were all written by some other person, and probably by William Smith. Concerning the other list, the evidence is more uncertain; but while some critics have believed that Shakespeare might have written at least some of them, the weight of fact and opinion is pretty decidedly against them all.

On the whole, it would seem to be very certain that plays were published in his name, in his own time, of which he was not the author. Nor does it appear that he ever took the least trouble to prevent this unwarrantable use of his name: no denial, or other vindication of his reputation, has come down to us. We know that it was not an unusual thing, in those days, for "sharking booksellers" to set a great name to a book "for sale-sake." The name of Sir Philip Sidney was used in this manner, and even that of Shakespeare was set to Heywood's translation of Ovid, by Jaggard, in 1612; but Mr. Halliwell finds some intimation, coming from Heywood himself, that Shakespeare was "much offended" with Jaggard for this liberty with his name: it is more probable, in this instance, that Heywood could be the most offended man of the two. It may be



taken as sufficiently established, that this good-natured actor and manager was in the habit of publishing, or suffering to be published, in his name or initials, the plays which were owned by his theatre, as they were produced on the stage, of some of which it is well ascertained that he was not the author; that he was not particular about shining thus in borrowed feathers; that he never took the least care of his reputation as an author, either before or after his retiring from the stage; and so, that the simple fact, that the plays and poems appeared under his name, and being reputed to be his, in his own time, so passed into the traditional myth, must lose nearly all force of evidence as touching the question of the real authorship. In a word, he was just such a character as would naturally be hit upon as a convenient and necessary cover for an aspiring and prolific genius, an irrepressible wit, a poetic imaginator, a man of all knowledge, classical learning, and a world-wide soul, who was at the same time ambitious of promotion in the state, in which direction lay the plan of his life, though never basely obsequious to power withal (as some have imagined), still suffering by neglect and "the meanness of his estate," soliciting in vain, lacking advancement, and "eating the air, promise-crammed"; and who had determined to "profess not to be a poet," but felt that he had a mission beyond the exigencies of the hour, and what is more, that his light must shine, though he should conceal his name in a cloud.

"And keep invention in a noted weed."

*Sonnet LXXVI.*

But if any one shall deem it necessary to assign some of these doubtful plays to this author, he will consider that this argument loses nothing in strength or force on that account. Between the time of Bacon's becoming an utter barrister of Gray's Inn, in 1582, and the publication of the "*Venus and Adonis*," there was a period of two years, in which a number of such plays may much better have been written by him than by William Shakespeare. They were not admitted

into the Folio of 1623; the editors, whether Heming and Condell, or some other, either knew them to be spurious, or rejected them as youthful and inferior productions, and as unworthy to take a place among the greater works of the author before the tribunal of posterity; and all critics seem to concur in that opinion of their relative merit. It may have been for the same reason that the "Pericles" was not included in the Folio, though undoubtedly a work of this author. It is quite possible, however, that the copyright had been sold, and could not be regained. The play appears to have been founded upon a very ancient and popular tale, and it is highly probable that it was an early work, though by no means a weak or an immature production. The best critics seem to agree that it had been retouched by the hand of the master in his better style before it was brought out anew in 1607-8, and printed in 1609, as "the late and much admired play called 'Pericles, Prince of Tyre,'" and "as it hath been divers and sundry times acted by his Majesty's Servants at the Globe on the Banckside," with the name of William Shakespeare on the title-page. The text (say Harness and White) is very corrupt and full of errors; and the reason of this may lay precisely in the fact that it was not revised by the real editor of the Folio, nor printed under his supervision. The story is more ancient than the time and countries in which the scene is laid. It is a deeply interesting and touching dramatic romance, as addressed not to modern rose-water criticism merely, but to the human heart of the world's theatre, and rather as it was in the ancient than in the modern times; and the spirit of the Greek drama, and even much of the touching simplicity of the tales of the Odyssey, is preserved in it. The first scene of the fifth act, in particular, bears a close resemblance to the style and manner of the dramatic dialogue of Euripides. So, likewise, the "Titus Andronicus" is, in some points of substance rather than in the form, a imitation of the more serious Greek tragedy; and it

furnishes indubitable evidence that the author was familiar with the ancient drama. The main topics of this history of the Prince of Tyre afford occasion, also, for those profound exhibitions of human nature in the opposite extremes of vice and virtue which came within the range of this author's studies. And after a manner which is at least not improbable for the younger hand of Francis Bacon, who, throughout his life, held knowledge and virtue to be superior to riches; who, in his youth, had taken all knowledge to be his province, and, as he said himself, "rather referred and aspired to virtue than to gain;"<sup>1</sup> who pursued that immortality which makes a man a god, confessing he was by nature "fitter to hold a book than play a part"; and who made a study of all arts, and was particularly curious in his investigations into the medicinal virtues of plants and minerals, as well as into all the hidden mysteries of Nature, being also much in the habit of turning over authorities; — Lord Cerimon speaks thus in the "Pericles":—

"I held it ever,

Virtue and cunning were endowments greater  
Than nobleness and riches: careless heirs  
May the two latter darken and expend;  
But immortality attends the former,  
Making a man a god. 'T is known I ever  
Have studied physic, through which secret art,  
By turning o'er authorities, I have  
(Together with my practice) made familiar  
To me and to my aid the blest infusions  
That dwell in vegetives, in metals, stones;  
And I can speak of the disturbances  
That Nature works, and of her cures; which gives  
A more content in course of true delight  
Than to be thirsty after tottering honour,  
Or tie my treasure up in silken bags,  
To please the Fool and Death." — *Act III. Sc. 2.*

<sup>1</sup> *Letter to Egerton.*



## § 8. THE AUTHOR'S ATTAINMENTS.

It will be unnecessary to undertake to demonstrate at large herein, from the internal evidence contained in the plays themselves, that their author was a classical scholar, was acquainted with several foreign languages, was an adept in natural science, was a lawyer by profession, was a profound metaphysical philosopher, and was in general a man of high and polished culture and extensive learning for his time in all branches of human knowledge, in addition to the largest amount of natural genius and intellectual power which may reasonably be allowed to any mortal. The most competent judges in these matters have so pronounced. The inference has been, not that any other man was in fact the author of these works (at least, until Miss Delia Bacon ventured so to declare<sup>1</sup>), but that the received biography of William Shakespeare was a myth and a mistake; and so the chief critics have proceeded to imagine for him some unwritten and unknown biography. But we shall have to accept the known personal history as at last the true account (in the main) of the man William Shakespeare. The later inquiries of modern scholars, the Shakespeare Society included, have ended only in rendering the supposition still more extravagant and absurd than it was before; for the results, which have been carefully summed up by Mr. Halliwell and later biographers, furnish no data on which the previous account of his life can be in any material degree modified in respect of this matter. On the contrary, the new facts (such as are not forgeries) only concur with what was known before in representing him to us as a man whose heart and soul were more intent upon business, social affairs, and (what Lord Coke took to be the chief end of man) industrious money-getting, than upon anything that pertained to the literary part of his profession. The essential problem still remains.

<sup>1</sup> *Phil. of Shakes. Plays Unfolded*. Boston, 1857.



A few brief words only will be added under this topic. The writer was a classical scholar. Rowe found traces in him of the "Electra" of Sophocles; Colman, of Ovid; Pope, of Dares Phrygius and other Greek authors; Farmer, of Horace and Virgil; Malone, of Lucretius, Statius, Catullus, Seneca, Sophocles, and Euripides; Staerens, of Plautus; Knight, of the "Antigone" of Sophocles; White, of the "Alcestis" of Euripides; and doubtless many resemblances and imitations of the ancient authors have been noticed by other critics and scholars. For resemblances with Euripides, certainly too striking to be altogether accidental, the curious reader may compare these passages: "Orestes," 1264-6, and "Electra," 630, with "Macbeth," I. 7; "Orestes," 1271, with "Hamlet," III. 4; "Orestes," 1291 and 1375, with "Macbeth," II. 2; and generally the "Orestes" and "Electra" with "Hamlet" and "Macbeth"; "Medea," 1284-9, with "Hamlet," IV. 7; "Hellene," 270, with Sonnet CXXI; "Hellene," 303-14, with "Richard II.," II. 1; "Ehesus" with "3 Henry VI.," IV. 2; and also the "Antigone" of Sophocles, 1344-5, with the "Timon of Athens," IV. 3, and the Timon of Lucian with the play of "Timon."

Some have sought, with Dr. Farmer, to find the source of all this classical learning in sundry English translations, but it has been an idle undertaking; for it appears that he drew, in fact, from the untranslated authors. The greater part of the story of Timon was taken from the untranslated Greek of Lucian, an author that is several times quoted in the writings of Bacon. Ovid and Tacitus were favourite authors with Bacon, and frequent traces of both are to be found in the plays. The "Comedy of Errors" was little more than a reproduction (in a different dress) of the *Moonchimi* of Plautus, also an author that is frequently quoted by Bacon. The first mention that we have of this play is, that it was performed during the twelve days of the Christmas Revels at Gray's Inn, in 1594, on which occasion it is

now historically known that Francis Bacon furnished at least a masque,<sup>1</sup> and (as I will attempt to prove) this very play also; and there was no translation of the *Menoechmus* before 1595. Beginning the career of an actor with "small Latin and less Greek," William Shakespeare cannot be presumed to have made himself acquainted with much of the Greek and Latin literature, and especially not with Sophocles, Euripides, and Plato, as this writer undoubtedly was; for these had not been translated. The author was able to drink deep of the very spirit of the Greek tragedy, without danger of drowning in the bowl; according to some great critics, he surpassed it altogether; and a thorough student may discover in the plays not only traces of Plato, but a wonderful approximation to the depth and breadth of the Platonic philosophy. Moreover, he was well versed in the ancient mythology, and in the history, manners, and customs of antiquity: in short, he knew all the wisdom of the ancients.

It is equally clear that he knew French and Italian. The story of Othello was taken from the Italian of Cinthio's "Il Capitano Moro," of which no translation is known to have existed; the tale of "Cymbeline" was drawn from an Italian novel of Boccaccio, not known to have been translated into English; and the like is true of some other plays. Several of the plays were founded upon stories taken from Belleforest's "Histoires Tragiques," of which some few were to be found in Painter's translation, of which one volume had been published in the time of Shakespeare, but others of them had not been translated. Francis Bacon had lived four years in Paris, and was master of the French, Italian, and Spanish languages; and it is highly probable that, in 1580, he would be in possession of the "Histoires Tragiques" as well as of the Essays of Montaigne in the original French. Florio's translation of Montaigne was published in 1603, and it has been said

<sup>1</sup> Spedding's *Letters and Life of Bacon* (London, 1861), I. 325-342.

that an old copy had been found which contained an autograph of William Shakespeare; but Mr. Halliwell is compelled to reject the story as not authentic. Nevertheless, it is reasonable enough to suppose that so notable a book as this was may have fallen into his hands.

The author was skilled in natural science. He pursued a scientific rather than the common method of observation, though the scientific observation of that day had in it something of poetic vagueness and generality as compared with modern methods. This is visible in the nature of his illustrations, metaphors, and allusions; and it is clear that he had made some study of the medical science and *materia medica* of his time. Pope did not fail to notice that he had a taste for "natural philosophy and mechanics." He understood the whole machinery of astrology, alchemy, witchcraft, and sorcery, not merely as it stood in the popular traditions, but in the sense of the written literature of that day; and he had a philosophy of spirits, ghosts, witches, dreams, visions, and prophecies, so subtle and profound as to be beyond the reach of uninitiated and un-instructed genius. The spontaneous and merely natural man does not proceed in that manner. He will see things in a certain general, vague, and common way, as it were, in the gross and complex only, and rather in merely fanciful relations than in that accurate manner of close and deep analysis, which also discovers the scientific form and real nature of things, as seen in all true poetry; and such must have been the habit and manner of this author. This accords with the known history of Bacon's earlier as well as his later years; for he was always a close observer of nature, and pursued in private his experimental researches, never losing sight of his great work, the instauration of natural history and physical science, as the surest foundation for philosophy itself, and the safest road into the higher realm of metaphysics. It would indeed be a wonder, as Pope said, if a man could know the world by intuition, and see through nature at one glance.



He was a lawyer too. His use of legal terms and phrases, in the sonnets as well as the plays, and his representations of legal proceedings, are of such a kind and character, that it is at once apparent to the mind of a lawyer, that the writer had been educated to that profession. Mr. Collier and Lord Campbell were not the first to observe this very important fact. Neither the long list of examples cited by Malone,<sup>1</sup> nor the learned essay of Lord Campbell, by any means contains them all; they pervade these writings with that peculiar use which is familiar to the lawyer only, and they flow from him as unconsciously as his very soul. Such learning, most certainly, does not come by instinct, though we admit, with Dogberry, that "to read and write comes by nature"; and no acquaintance which William Shakespeare could have had with the law, consistently with the known facts of his life, can reasonably account for this striking feature in the plays. It was not to be had in the office of a bailiff; and the considerations referred to by Lord Campbell, though of the nature of negative evidence, ought to be taken as satisfactory, that he could never have been a regular student at law at Stratford-on-Avon; especially since his Lordship did not become a convert to this unavoidable and very necessary theory of Mr. Collier.

The speech of the Archbishop on the Salic law, in the "Henry V.," as Dr. Farmer observed, was evidently taken, and almost literally versified, from a passage in Holinshed's *Chronicles*,<sup>2</sup> together with a quotation from the *Book of Numbers*, to the effect that when a man dies without a son, the inheritance descends to the daughter. And it is at least singularly curious, that in the "Apothegms" of Bacon there are two anecdotes, based, the one upon the same doctrine with regard to the Salic law as that maintained in this speech, viz., that in France itself males claimed by women, with a repetition of the French "gloss" of Holinshed; and the other upon a quotation from Scripture, as in

<sup>1</sup> *Chron. Order of Shakes. Plays.*

<sup>2</sup> *Chron. of Eng.* III. 65.



both Holinshed and the speech. It is, of course, possible that Shakespeare might make plays, and Bacon, apothegms, out of Holinshed; but when numerous instances of the same kind occur (as will be shown), it may well furnish an indication that the transition took place through the same mind in both cases. He was in the habit of making apothegms of his own wit; that concerning the "seditious prelude" of Dr. Hayward (as supposed) and his own facetious attempt to avert the anger of the Queen, who thought there was treason in it, may be taken as one instance; and perhaps we have another in the apothegm of the fellow named Hogg, who importuned Sir Nicholas Bacon to save his life, claiming that there was kindred between Hog and Bacon. "Aye," replied the judge, "you and I cannot be kindred, except you be hanged; for Hog is not Bacon until it be well hanged."<sup>1</sup> And the same jest appears in the "Merry Wives of Windsor," thus:—

*"Evans. Accusativo, hing, hang, hog.*

*Quick. Hang hog is Latin for bacon, I warrant you."—Act IV. Sc. 1.*

A passage in the second part of the "Henry IV." (Act III. Sc. 2) would seem to render it highly probable that the writer himself had seen somebody "fight with one Sampson Stockfish, a fruiterer, behind Gray's Inn." There are allusions also in the first part of the "Henry IV.," from which it may be inferred that St. Albans was a familiar name and a favorite place with the author; and Gorhambury near St. Albans had been the country residence of his father, and, after his father's death, of his mother, and subsequently, his own country-seat. He was several times elected to Parliament for the borough of St. Albans, which was the site of the ancient *Verulamium*, whence were taken his titles of Baron Verulam and Viscount St. Albans; and he directed by his will that his remains should be buried in "St. Michael's Church, near St. Albans." And after his fall from power, when he had returned to his lodgings in

<sup>1</sup> Bacon's *Apothegms*.

Gray's Inn, and his "labours were now most set to have those works," which he had formerly published, "made more perfect," in a proposal which he was making to the King for a "Digest of the Laws," he says: "As for myself, the law was my profession, to which I am a debtor; some little helps I have of other arts, which may give form to matter."

Moreover, this writer was a philosopher. "He was not only a great poet, but a great philosopher," says Coleridge. These words from such a man may be presumed to mean something. And when such judges of the matter as Schiller, Goethe, and Jean Paul Richter also agree in finding that he was a philosopher, no one need be amazed at the assertion, that he was master of all the learning of the Greeks, and had sounded the depths of Plato. For the mass of readers, it can no more be expected, that they should comprehend, in any adequate manner, what this really means, than that they should understand, without more, what was meant by the *Philosophia Prima* of Bacon, or "Philosophy itself." But it can never mean less than one who has carried his studies into the highest realms of human thought and culture; and that was never the work of a day, nor often of a whole life. Nor was it ever the work of intuition merely. It is at least conceivable, that a man who was capable of taking a critical survey of all previous learning, and pointing out the way for the advancement of human knowledge, who wrote civil and moral essays upon all phases of life and character, which still live as fresh as ever, and who could venture to undertake the instauration, not of physical science merely, but of philosophy itself, might, by possibility, be able to write such dramas as the "Romeo and Juliet," the "Midsummer Night's Dream," the "As You Like It," the "Measure for Measure," the "Cymbeline," the "Hamlet," the "Lear," the "Macbeth," the "Timon of Athens," the "Troilus and Cressida," and the "Tempest"; but, for such a man as we

know for William Shakespeare, it would appear to be a thing next to impracticable, if not wholly impossible. It would probably be of no sort of use or effect to declare here that this consideration, duly weighed, ought to be taken as conclusive of the whole matter. In fact, it will not; and the inquiry must proceed.

A well-marked difference may be looked for between the earlier and the later works of any writer. More striking evidence of growth does not exist in the works of Schiller, or Goethe, which were produced before, and those produced after, they respectively became initiated into the mysteries of the higher philosophy, than is manifest in the earlier and later plays of Shakespeare. In either case, the collegiate erudition of the tyro is, at length, lost in the comprehensive learning of the finished scholar, and the exuberant fancy of the spontaneous poet and inexperienced youth becomes subdued into the matured strength and breadth, the depth of feeling, and the prophetic insight of the seer and the philosopher. We know that Francis Bacon had practiced those "Georgics of the Mind" on which all critical thinking and high art depend. He comprehended that "Exemplar or Platform of Good," the "Colours of Good and Evil," and that "Regiment or Culture of the Mind,"<sup>1</sup> whereby alone the highest excellence may be reached; and he had attained to that noble philosophy, whereby only the soul of man is to be "raised above the confusion of things" to that height of Plato, where, situate as upon a cliff, he may have "a prospect of the order of nature and the errors of men."<sup>2</sup>

In Francis Bacon, we have a man three years older than William Shakespeare, and, when the latter came to London, already ten years from the University and some four years an utter barrister of Gray's Inn, and well prepared, by the best possible advantages of early education, finished classical scholarship, foreign travel, and residence at royal

<sup>1</sup> *Adv. of Learning.*

<sup>2</sup> *Works* (Montagu), I. 252.



courts, extraordinary natural gifts and learned acquisitions, for commencing and prosecuting such a work; and in the situation of the briefless young barrister, in the midst of books, making slow progress in the profession, getting no advancement for a period of twenty-five years after his coming to the bar beyond the unproductive honor of a Queen's or King's Counsel and a seat in Parliament, laboring under the twofold embarrassment of an expensive mode of life and debt to the Lombards and Jews, casting about for "some lease of quick revenue" to relieve (as he says) "the meanness of my estate," enjoying the society of the theatre-going and masque-devising young courtiers, the dazzling favor of the Court, the ample leisure of Gray's Inn, and occasionally the Arcadian quiet of Gorhambury and Twickenham Park; and in his known devotion to all manner of studies and the profoundest speculations, we may find the needful preparation, the time for writing and for study, and the means of growth and culture which the case requires. And his acknowledged prose compositions of that period, to say nothing of the sonnets which he addressed to the Queen, or the masques which he wrote for her entertainment, exhibit all the necessary qualities of the poet. He was "a poetic imagination," says George Darley, "and dramatic poets are (or ought to be) philosophers."<sup>1</sup> Even Macaulay admitted that "the poetical faculty was powerful in Bacon's mind; but not, like his wit, so powerful as occasionally to usurp the place of his reason."<sup>2</sup>

As early as 1610, Shakespeare, having some time before ceased to play his part as an actor upon the stage, had retired from the theatres in London, and resumed his permanent residence in Stratford-on-Avon. He is not known to have had any further connection with the stage. But in 1611 were produced the "Winter's Tale" and the "Tempest." The "Lear" was first performed before the King

<sup>1</sup> *Introd. to Works of Beaumont and Fletcher*, by George Darley.

<sup>2</sup> *Misc.* II. 408.



at Whitehall, in 1606, and the "*Troilus and Cressida*," in 1609; and the first notice that we have of the "*Tempest*" is, that it was performed before the King's Majesty at Whitehall, in November, 1611; and the "*Winter's Tale*," first acted at the Globe, in May, 1611, was performed before the King at Whitehall, a few days after the "*Tempest*." Both were repeated at Court during the festivities attending the nuptials of the Princess Elizabeth and the Elector Palatine, toward the close of the year 1612, and in the spring of 1613. And on the thirtieth day of June following, and while these festivities were still proceeding, as it appears, the magnificent play of "*Henry VIII.*" was for the first time produced in great splendor at the Globe, with the presence (if not the assistance) of Ben Jonson (Shakespeare having retired from London), containing a studied and special compliment to King James. On the twenty-seventh of October, thereafterwards, Sir Francis Bacon, Solicitor-General, having sometime before "come with his pitcher to Jacob's well, as others did," and obtained "the royal promise to succeed to the higher place," is raised to the laborious and lucrative position of Attorney-General, and the plays cease to appear. William Shakespeare continues, a few years longer, to enjoy the social comforts of New Place, prosecuting at leisure his agricultural pursuits and miscellaneous traffic, and dies in April, 1616, leaving a handsome estate and a will.

#### § 9. THE TRUE ORIGINAL COPIES.

Seven years after the death of Shakespeare, these last-  
ing memorials of the most transcendent genius were gathered up from the play-houses in London (as it would seem) by his surviving fellows, Heming and Condell, who appear to have assumed the function of editors; and they were published in the Folio of 1623, as they say in the preface, from "the true original Copies." What and whence were these true original copies? Let us consider of this. As

early as 1589, commissioners were appointed by the Queen to revise stage-plays; and after 1594, they had to be licensed and entered at Stationers' Hall, before they could be printed, being prohibited, "except they bee allowed by such as have auctoritie." Nevertheless, some may have been printed without license. Before 1600, theatres had become so numerous and disorderly that all but two, the Globe and the Fortune, were suppressed by public order. Plays sold to a theatre were kept for its own exclusive use, and when they got abroad, as sometimes they did, through surreptitious copies, or when they found their way into the hands of the printers, other theatres, on appeal to the authorities, were prohibited from acting them. It appears by the entries in the Register of the Stationers' Company, that the publishers of plays claimed a right of property in the copy, which was considered assignable; and when the Folio of 1623 was published by Jaggard and Blount, an entry was made at Stationers' Hall of the sixteen plays which had not been printed before, by their titles, as of "soe many of the said Copies as are not formerly entered to other men," and these sixteen were assigned by Jaggard and Blount, in 1630, to one of the publishers of the Folio of 1632. But how the publishers of the first Folio had acquired the copyright of the rest of the plays from those "other men," does not appear: it is to be presumed they did so. It is probable that this right of property in the copy was not then so protected by law as to be a thing of much value, there being no effective remedy either at law or in equity: at least, none appears to have been sought in the courts. The chief object of this license and entry seems to have been to secure a strict censorship of the press; a function that was exercised at first by commissioners, and afterwards by the Master of the Revels. When a copy had been licensed to one publisher, a second license appears sometimes to have been granted to another, perhaps after a transfer of the copyright. The printing of

books was held to be a matter of state, to be regulated by Star-Chamber decrees, letters-patent, commissions, and the ordinances "set down for the good government of the Stationers' Company." And though some right of property in the copy may have existed at common law, none was ever distinctly recognized by any legislation, nor by any reported judicial decision before the year 1640;<sup>1</sup> but in 1637, a decree of the Star-Chamber prohibited the printing of any book or copy which the Stationers' Company, or any other person, had obtained the sole right to print, by entry in their Register; whence it may be inferred that previous to that date this right had been but little respected. Nevertheless, it will be borne in mind that this right of property in a book was called the *copy* in those days, whence the term *copyright* came into use in the law. None of these plays were ever entered in the name of William Shakespeare, as owner of the copy, but all in the names of the several publishers; and there were different publishers of the several plays at dates not far apart. And after the publication of the Folio of 1623, there were, in like manner as before, separate entries of several of the plays for license to print by other publishers, at different dates. Whence it may be inferred that no well-recognized copyright existed in any owner of those plays, or that it was often and readily transferred; and so, that the publishers of the Folio could have had but little difficulty in obtaining the copyright from those "other men," if indeed there were any at all. It is barely possible that this difficulty may have been the reason why the "Pericles" was not included in the Folio, though it may have been rejected by the Editor.

We know from Blackstone that stage-plays unlicensed were liable to indictment as public nuisances,<sup>2</sup> and inasmuch as they had to be licensed before they could be printed, it is certain that complete manuscripts must have

<sup>1</sup> Curtis on Copyright, 26; 1 Eden on Inj., cxli.

<sup>2</sup> 4 Comm., 168.



been furnished to the proper officer for examination. So Chettle said of Greene's "Groatsworth of Wit": "I had only in the copy this share; it was ill written, as sometime Greene's hand was none of the best; licensed it must be ere it could be printed, which could never be if it might not be read."<sup>1</sup>

Now, as to the "six true and genuine copies" (spoken of by Capell), of which only some meagre first draughts had been printed in quarto, and the sixteen plays that were first printed in the Folio, if not, in fact, as to all of them, the true original copies could only mean the perfected manuscripts: it is plain they were not the quartos. And then the proposition must be, that the complete and finished manuscripts were in the possession of these editors as managers of the theatre. They were not committed to their charge by the will of Shakespeare, nor do they say anything in their preface of having received them from his executors. Of course, the author must have furnished a complete manuscript copy to the theatre, from which the separate parts for the use of the actors might be drawn off. The conjecture of Pope, upon a very superficial examination, that the plays in the Folio were printed from such piecemeal parts, with all the interpolations, alterations, and mistakes of the actors, is effectually negatived by the more thorough studies and comparisons of later critics. No entry was made, nor any quarto printed, of any work of Shakespeare between 1609 and his death in 1616, but between this date and 1623 there were six reprints of quartos, besides the "Othello," of which the first quarto appeared in 1622. Whence came the manuscript of this "Othello"? Was it furnished by the theatre, or by Hemming and Condell, or by the author himself? It appears, by an entry in the official accounts of the Revels at Court, that a play of the "Moor of Venise" was acted before King James at Whitehall, on the first day of November

<sup>1</sup> *Kind Heart's Dream*, (Halliwell, 146.)



1604, by "his Majesty's Servants"; but Mr. White has given some very good reasons for believing that this was an older play by another author, and probably founded upon Cinthio's novel called "The Moor of Venice," especially as the names of Othello and Iago appear to have been taken from the "History of the Prince of Denmark," which was not printed until 1605, and that it was not the "Othello" of Shakespeare, which bears internal evidence of the matured hand of the master; the composition of which he would place as late as 1611, or afterwards, mainly on the ground that it contains an unmistakable allusion to the creation of the order of baronets, which took place in that year, supported by the consideration of the rather extraordinary circumstance that it was not printed before 1622, thirteen years having then elapsed since the last quarto of a new play had appeared, and when there were nineteen other plays, which had never been printed, and were known to the public only upon the stage; that is, such of them as were known at all; for, of some of them, as the "Coriolanus," the "Antony and Cleopatra," and the "Timon of Athens," there is no evidence that they had ever appeared upon the stage, or were known to the public, before they were printed in the Folio. This is, indeed, very remarkable; and, taking Mr. White's opinion to be well founded, since Mr. Collier's entry of the "Othello" in the Egerton Papers of the date of 1602 has been clearly shown to be a downright forgery, there remains on record no notice whatever of this "Othello" until it was entered at Stationers' Hall in October, 1621. But that this play should have made its first appearance at Court as so many others did, or even at the house of the Lord Keeper Egerton, a friend of Sir Francis Bacon, need not be considered as anything extraordinary in itself, and that it had not fallen into the hands of the printers before 1622, though it had been upon the stage some years before that date, Richard Burbage, who died in 1619, having been famous in the

character of Othello, may be considered less surprising, when it is remembered that the same is true of several other of the later and greater plays of this author.<sup>1</sup>

The previous quartos may be considered under three heads: first draughts, surreptitious editions of stolen copies, and completed plays. Of some of these first draughts and surreptitious copies, the completed and perfected plays appeared for the first time in the Folio of 1623; of others of them, as the "Hamlet" for instance, we have quartos nearly complete before 1604; and of nineteen of the plays, the first known editions are in the Folio. And of those which had previously appeared in quarto, it is found that some of them had been remodelled and rewritten, that others had undergone extensive revision, with important additions, alterations, omissions, and emendations, and that nearly all of them had received such critical correction and emendation as necessarily to imply that they were made by the hand of the master himself. The "Othello" of the Folio was printed at about the same time as the quarto, and, as Mr. Knight thinks, was probably struck off before it, but from the original manuscript without reference to the quarto; Mr. White agrees that it was printed from another and an improved text; and it is regularly divided into acts and scenes, while the quarto is not, and contains one hundred and sixty-three lines, the most striking in the play, which are not found in the quarto, while the quarto does not contain ten lines which are not in the Folio;<sup>2</sup> and both these critics agree that the additions and corrections are of such a nature as to indicate the agency of the author's own hand, as in the case of the "Hamlet," the "Lear," the "Richard II.," the "Richard III.," the "Henry IV.," and, indeed, of nearly all the plays. Now, whence this difference in the manuscript copy?

According to Mr. White, the "Love's Labor's Lost" of

<sup>1</sup> White's *Shakes.*, XI. 362-4.

<sup>2</sup> Knight's *Stud. of Shakes.*; White's *Shakes.*, XI. 360-4.

the Folio corrects a great many more errors than it makes, and has variations which must have come from some other source than the previous quarto. The "Henry V." of the Folio contains nineteen hundred lines more than the quarto of 1600, and, according to Mr. Knight, is not only augmented by the addition of new scenes and characters, but there is scarcely a speech which is not elaborated. The "Merry Wives of Windsor" in the Folio contains nearly double the number of lines that are found in the quarto of 1602, and it is greatly remodelled, whole scenes rewritten, speeches elaborated and emended, and characters heightened by the addition of new and distinctive features. Slender is a small affair in the quarto, and Shallow a different person altogether in the Folio. The "Titus Andronicus" appears in the Folio with a whole new scene added, and the "Much Ado About Nothing" in the Folio, according to White, has important corrections of a nature to indicate that they were made by authority; and it is greatly superior to the quarto in respect of editorial supervision. The "Lear" of the Folio, as compared with the quarto of 1608, contains large additions, corrections, and omissions. Some fifty lines of the Folio are not found in the quarto, and some two hundred and twenty-five lines of the quarto, comprising one whole scene and some striking passages, are omitted in the Folio. The omissions can no more be attributed to Heming and Condell than the additions, which, says Knight, "comprise several such minute touches as none but the hand of the master could have super-added."<sup>1</sup> The "Tempest," the "Winter's Tale," the "Measure for Measure," the "Cymbeline," the "Midsummer Night's Dream," the "Henry VIII.," the "Julius Cæsar," the "Lear," the "Troilus and Cressida," and the "Antony and Cleopatra," (according to both Knight and White), are among those which are printed with singular correctness in the Folio, some of them even to the niceties of punctua-

<sup>1</sup> *Stud. of Shakes.*, 337.



tion, furnishing the most decisive evidence of unusual care in the supervision of the press; while some few others appear to have had but little attention from editor or proof-reader. But here is enough, without dwelling further upon particular instances, to warrant the conclusion, not merely that the Folio of 1623 must be taken as the most authentic edition of the plays that we have, but that it had an editorial revision, as compared with all previous editions, far beyond anything that can safely be imagined for Heming and Condell. Indeed, as to the greater part of the corrections and all the additions and principal emendations, they can only be attributed, as they have been, to the author himself. And then the proposition for William Shakespeare must be, that they were all made before his death, if not before he retired from London; and this (it is perhaps conceivably possible) he might have done as easily as he could write the "Tempest," the "Winter's Tale," and the "Henry VIII.," between 1610 and 1613, and the "Othello" before 1616. But the theory also requires us to believe that he furnished the new and amended manuscript copies to the theatre, which were "the true original copies" in the hands of Heming and Condell, seven years later, the "Othello" inclusive. Having no regard for his reputation and fame as an author, why should he take all this trouble and pains merely for the benefit of the theatres which he had left? Or, having such regard, why should he wholly neglect to collect and publish them himself? Or if prevented by death, how should he fail to make any provision for their preservation and publication afterwards? And finally, having furnished to the theatre the finished manuscript of the "Othello," before 1616, how should there be such a difference between the quarto and the folio, when the manuscript for both must have come from the theatre, if not from the hands of Heming and Condell? And, in either case, how should an old and imperfect copy have been put into the hands of the printer, when the complete



and perfect manuscript had been in the actual use of the theatre for more than seven years!

But if the real author were still living to make these revisions himself, the whole mystery would be explained, and especially this enigma of the "Othello," which so much requires explanation; and the comparison of a single passage like the following is almost enough of itself to raise a strong suspicion that the fact was so. In the first scene of the second act, we find this expression —

— "the thought whereof

Doth like a poisonous mineral gnaw my inwards":—

and these lines, not found in the quarto of 1622, were inserted in the speech of Brabantio (Act I. Sc. 2) in the Folio:<sup>1</sup>—

"Judge me the world, if 't is not gross in sense,  
That thou hast practised on her with foul charms;  
Abus'd her delicate youth with drugs, or minerals,  
That waken motion. — I'll have 't disputed on;  
'T is probable, and palpable to thinking."

All this is in exact keeping with Bacon's ideas of "mineral medicines," that were "safer for the outward than inward parts," and of the effects which they may produce; as in a speech he uses the figure of "a certain violent and mineral spirit of bitterness."

It is possible, too, to suppose that these improved original manuscripts may have passed from the theatre into the hands of Heming and Condell; that they were submitted to the Master of the Revels for license and then placed in the hands of the printers; and that, being superseded in the use of the stage by the printed plays, they may have finally gone to destruction; but it is extremely difficult, as Mr. Halliwell observes, to account for their total disappearance. And it is certainly a little remarkable, that neither these editors, who took the pains to collect and publish these works, should have preserved a single manuscript as

<sup>1</sup> White's *Shakes.*, XI., Notes, 494.

a memorial of their departed fellow, nor any member of his family, as a memento in his own handwriting of so distinguished a poet, their ancestor; and that not a single paper of his writing should have been handed down within the reach of any tradition. But nothing definite can be founded on an argument of this kind.

On the other hand, taking Francis Bacon for the author, we may suppose that the original manuscript copies would be kept a secret of his private cabinet; and that transcripts only in the handwriting of William Shakespeare would come to the knowledge of the players. The remark that he never blotted out a line would seem to imply that the manuscripts which they saw were in his handwriting, with which they must have been acquainted. After his death, it would become necessary for the real author to find some other cover for the purpose of publication. His fellow actors, Heming and Condell, might be selected to stand in his place as ostensible editors. Little more would be required than the use of their names. The dedication and preface would be written by the author himself: they have been supposed to have been written by Ben Jonson. The proof-sheets could be privately sent to his chambers in Bedford House, or in Gray's Inn, or the matter of proof-reading may have been left to the printer. All this would imply that Heming and Condell became parties to the secret; in such case, they would feel no interest in the manuscripts; and the arrangement with them must have been made, if at all, as early as 1622, or soon after the date of Bacon's fall from the woolsack and his banishment to his books and private studies at Gorhambury, Bedford House, and Gray's Inn. The original manuscripts, of course, Bacon would take care to destroy, if determined that the secret should die with him.

We know from Bacon's will, that he directed his servant, Henry Percy, to deliver to his brother, Sir John Constable, all his manuscript compositions and fragments, to be pub-

lished as he might see fit, taking "the advice of Mr. Selden and Mr. Herbert of the Inner Temple," and also desired his brother Constable and Sir William Boswell, presently after his decease, to take into their hands all his papers whatsoever, "which are either in cabinets, boxes, or presses, and them to seal up until they may at their leisure peruse them."<sup>1</sup> It would seem probable that all these manuscripts and papers remained locked up for some fourteen months after his death, when letters of administration were granted to Sir Thomas Rich and Mr. Thomas Meautys, and that afterwards the greater part (at least) of the manuscripts came into the custody of Dr. Rawley, his former chaplain and secretary; though some of them appear to have been carried to Holland by Sir William Boswell, and placed in the hands of Isaac Gruter, who published a part of them at Amsterdam in 1653. Gruter's preface mentions certain moral and political pieces which were not published by him, and which, according to Mr. Spedding,<sup>2</sup> remain to be accounted for, unless they were transferred to Dr. Rawley to be included in the *Opuscula* of 1658. As late as 1652-5, certain letters of Isaac Gruter state that there still remained, in the cabinet of Dr. Rawley, other manuscripts of the "Verulamian workmanship," which, being "committed to faithful privacy," were as yet "denied to the public." The actual character of these writings is not stated, but, from the whole tenor of the correspondence and the relations of the parties, it may be distinctly gathered that they were fragments of a philosophical, political, or moral nature in prose. There appears to be no ground whatever for any inference beyond this. Had the manuscripts of these plays been left in existence by Bacon, it is scarcely conceivable that we should never have heard of them, and that they should even have escaped the late thorough research of Mr. Spedding. He must have destroyed them before his

<sup>1</sup> *Baconiano*, 203; Craik's *Bacon*, 223.

<sup>2</sup> Preface, *Works* (Boston), V. 187-195.



death, if this theory be true: any other supposition would seem to be wholly inadmissible. Why he should desire such a secret to be buried with him, may be considered in another place: at present, we must take the fact to be so.

On the whole, nothing is made to appear, out of this critical comparison of copies and this modern research into the history of the Folio, necessarily to exclude, or essentially to contradict, the hypothesis, that this Folio may have been published at the secret instance and under the general direction of Lord Bacon himself; though it must be confessed that greater negligence would seem to be exhibited in some parts of it than is consistent with our ideas, at this day, of that particular and especial care, which the exquisite taste and personal feeling of such an author would lead us to expect in such a work. The credit due to the Folio for authenticity must be increased in the same degree that it is rendered probable that it was printed in this manner; and it is very certain that Lord Bacon was exclusively engaged, at this very time, in contemplations and studies in close retirement, continuing his philosophical labors, completing his instauration of all science, and carefully preparing for the press new and improved editions of works already published. He was thus sedulously endeavoring to put a fitting close to the labors of his life by carefully transmitting to posterity what he deemed worthy of preservation.

About the 22d of June, 1621, at the King's direction, he retired to his country-seat at Gorhambury, where he remained until sometime in the summer of 1622. On the 1st of September, 1621, he writes thus to Buckingham:—"I am much fallen in love with a private life; but yet I shall so spend my time as shall not decay my abilities for use."<sup>1</sup> In another letter from Gorhambury, dated February 3d, 1621-2,<sup>2</sup> he expresses a desire to get back to Lon-

<sup>1</sup> Letter, *Works* (Philad.), III. 135.

<sup>2</sup> It will be borne in mind that the year began, in those days, on the 25th of March, and not as now on the 1st day of January. Letter to Buckingham, *Works* (Philad.), III. 141.

don, where, as he says, "I could have helps at hand for my writings and studies, wherein I spend my time." In a memorandum made for an expected interview with the King, sometime in 1622, he writes thus:—"My story is proved: I may thank your Majesty; for I heard him note of Tasso, that he could know which poem he made when he was in good condition, and which when he was a beggar: I doubt he could make no such observation of me." Perhaps not, your lordship. During the autumn of 1622, his letters are dated from Bedford House, in London, and by the 8th of March, 1623, he had returned to his old lodgings in Gray's Inn. In a letter dated thence, March 22, 1622-3, he says:—"Myself for quiet and the better to hold out, am retired to Gray's Inn; for when my chief friends were gone so far off, it was time for me to go to a cell."<sup>1</sup> So Prospero, thrust from his dukedom, is again "master of a full poor cell," where,

"neglecting worldly ends, all dedicate  
To closeness,"

he is "wrapt in secret studies":—(*Tempest, Act I. Sc. 2.*)

\* This cell's my court: here have I few attendants,

And subjects none abroad: pray you look in."—*Id. Act V. Sc. 1.*

And in June, 1623, he writes to Mr. Tobie Matthew:—"It is true my labors are now most set to have those works I had formerly published, as that of *Advancement of Learning*, that of *Henry VII.*, that of the *Essays*, being retractate, and made more perfect, well translated into Latin by the help of some good pens, which forsake me not."<sup>2</sup> Of these "good pens" Ben Jonson was one, and George Herbert another. Again, in 1623, he writes to Prince Charles:—"For Henry the VIII., to deal plainly with your highness, I did despair of my health this summer, as I was glad to choose some such work as I might compass within days; so far was I from entering into a work of

<sup>1</sup> Letter to Cottington, *Works* (Mont.), XII. 439; (*Philad.*), III. 146.

<sup>2</sup> Letter, *Works* (*Philad.*), III. 151.

length. . . . . It began like a fable of the poets ; but it deserveth all in a piece a worthy narration."<sup>1</sup> In the thick crowding exigencies of this time, and in the long list of works given to the world during the five years next preceding his death, some explanation may be found, if it be required, for a somewhat negligent correction of the press, when "these trifles" were in question.

Steevens and others have thought they could discover in the Dedication and Preface to the Folio some traces of the hand of Ben Jonson. But surely with more reason it may be said, that in the thought, style, and diction of both, there is exhibited the very soul of the real Shakespeare himself ; as it were, *ex pede Herculem*. True, the story of the players in commendation of Shakespeare, that he never blotted out a line ("there never was a more groundless report," says Pope), is repeated in the Preface. But it is known that Ben Jonson was an intimate friend and great admirer of Bacon, and so fine a joke as this must have been for him would not fail to impress the mind of Bacon as well ; for, as Ben Jonson tells us, he could with difficulty "spare or pass by a jest." Jonson also writes of "my gentle Shakespeare," —

— "that he  
Who casts to write a living line, must sweat,  
(Such as thine are) and strike the second heat  
Upon the Muses anvil."

And so, according to the Dedication and Preface, "Mr. William Shakespeare's Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies" he would see published from "the true original copies (which he would know to be such), and dedicated to that "Most Noble and Incomparable Paire of Brethren," the Earls of Pembroke and Montgomery, patrons of learning and of the theatre, his particular friends, before he also should take his departure, and not have "the fate to be executor of his own writings," though he could not "but

<sup>1</sup> Letter, *Ibid.* 152-3.



know their dignity greater than to descend to the reading of these trifles." But the "Orphanes" should have "Guardians, without ambition either of selfe-profit or fame: onely to keep the memory of so worthy a Friend and Fellow alive as was our Shakespeare." These plays had "had their triall already, and stood out all Appeales," and they should "now come forth quitted rather by a Decree of Court than any purchased Letters of commendation" (executors, orphans, guardians, trials, appeals, and decrees of court were now ready on the tongue of the ex-chancellor), "cured and perfect of their limbes; and all the rest, absolute in their numbers as he conceived them" (what no one could better certify, "*quam historiam legitimam et omnibus numeris suis absolutam*"<sup>1</sup>); for he was "a happle imitator of Nature" (whereof the great "interpreter of Nature" might be sensible), and "a most gentle expresser of it. What he thought he uttered with that easinesse that wee have scarce received a blot in his papers" (what he could not spare to mention), and "his wit could no more lie hid than it could be lost" (as witness these records of it, which should not perish). He was to be read "again and again; for if then you do not like him, surely you are in some manifest danger not to understand him." So Heming and Condell would "leave you to other of his Friends, whom, if you need, can be your guides; if you need them not, you can leade yourselves and others; and such readers" they wished him.

Indeed it is altogether such a dedication and preface as might be expected from this "Jupiter in a thatch'd house, this secret inquisitor of nature, learning, and art; who in his youth had taken "all knowledge to be his province"; whose "vast contemplative ends" had embraced "the image of the universal world"; but who, in respect of these trifles, still preferred to die with his mask on. And such readers would he wish to have, who knew the danger, perhaps felt

<sup>1</sup> *De Aug. Scient.*, L. II. c. 5., *Works* (Boston), II. 202.

the certainty, that his own age would not fully understand him; but he would take care that these same trifles should be secured to the possession of those "next ages" which might be able to comprehend him aright. And he has left us also, perhaps unwittingly, the guides to the knowledge of who as well as what this "our Shakespeare" was; though

"As one that had been studied in his death,  
To throw away the dearest thing he ow'd,  
As 't were a careless trifle": — *Macbeth*, Act I. Sc. 4.

or, as he himself says of Aristotle, "as one that had been a challenger of all the world, and raised infinite contradiction;"<sup>1</sup> or as one that had been about to leave the shores of earth, and had cast a lingering look behind upon a thing known to be "immortal as himself"; as the sonnet sings:

"If my dear love were but the child of state,  
It might for fortune's bastard be unfather'd,  
As subject to Time's love, or to Time's hate,  
Weeds among weeds, or flowers with flowers gather'd.  
No, it was builded far from accident,  
It suffers not in smiling pomp, nor falls  
Under the blow of thrall'd discontent,  
Whereto th' inviting time our fashion calls:  
It fears not policy, that *Heretic*,  
Which works on leases of short number'd hours,  
But all alone stands hugely politic,  
That it nor grows with heat, nor drowns with showers.  
To this I witness call the fools of time,  
Which die for goodness, who have liv'd for crime."

*Sonnet cxxiv.*<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Works* (Boston), XII. 264.

<sup>2</sup> *Shakes. Sonnets*, (Fac-simile of the ed. of 1609, entitled "Shake-speares Sonnets: Never before Imprinted,") London, 1862.

## CHAPTER II.

### PRELIMINARIES. — BACON.

"Thou shalt know the man  
By the Athenian garments he hath on." — *Mis. N. Dr.*, II. 2.

#### § 1. CONTEMPORANEOUSNESS.

IN the outset of the inquiry, the contemporaneousness of the two men between whom the question in hand is supposed to lie, the comparative dates of their several works, and the leading facts and events of their lives, must come under special consideration, though briefly, as fundamental and very important. The general impression that has prevailed hitherto, or until very lately, respecting the character and genius of Lord Bacon and the scope of his philosophy, has been, and is, of itself, a huge stumbling-block in the way of the proposition that he could ever have been a poet at all. A more thorough study of the subject, under the light of judicious criticism, will effectually dispel this cloud of error. For the most part, all true notion of the man has been obscured in a murky atmosphere of political obfuscation, a kind of scientific haze, misunderstanding, misconception, and stupid mistake. Concerning him, as of many other men and things in the times long past, human villanies have been written into the semblance of illustrious history, wherein vice is put on a par with virtue, and the highest virtue below the par of vice; in which soaring intellect is subordinated to common-place ability, imagination held to be a species of folly or insanity, and metaphysics treated as synonymous with moonshine; in which books are rated as fit food for worms, and to be "drowned in



book-learning" is incontinently reckoned as a disqualification for the duties of life, whilst a certain overplus of common sense is supposed to be capable of all that is great or good; in which much learning is deemed worse than useless, philosophy a monomania or a crime, all poets vagrants, and the *summum bonum* no more nor less than Lord Coke's industrious money-getting chief end of man.<sup>1</sup> This inadequate and altogether unsatisfactory account of the matter had its origin in the confusions of a tyrannical reign, in a court and time as corrupt as anything that is to be found in the Italian or the later Roman story, and in the general ignorance in an age that was on the whole very dark, though some bright stars twinkled in the firmament of it; and it has been continued through the succeeding ages, which have been growing only less and less dark, down to our times. Basil Montagu's meagre sketch of Bacon's life began to throw some light into these scarcely penetrable obscurations. Lord Campbell's superficial view of the great Chancellor,<sup>2</sup> not attempting to get clear of the fogs, and taking Pope's epigram for basis and text, makes one half of his life and character as brilliant as sunlight, and the other as black as Erebus, and is, on the whole, more of a libel than a life. The diligent researches, however, of later scholars have given to the world an excellent and reliable edition of Lord Bacon's Works, and brought forth many new and interesting data concerning him, which may be said to bear the stamp of historic truth.<sup>3</sup> The "Personal History" and the "Story" of Mr. Dixon,<sup>4</sup> and the "Letters and Life" by Mr. Spedding, in a more complete detail of dates, records, facts, and circumstances, with due reverence for the genius and character of their hero, and in much nearer sym-

<sup>1</sup> Campbell's *Lives of the Chief Jus.* (Philad., 1851), I. 279.

<sup>2</sup> *Lives of the Lord Chan.* (Philad., 1851), II.

<sup>3</sup> *Bacon's Works*, by Spedding, Ellis, and Heath, Boston, 1860-1864; *Letters and Life of Francis Bacon*, by James Spedding, London, 1861-2.

<sup>4</sup> *Personal History of Lord Bacon*, Boston, 1861; *Story of Lord Bacon's Life*, London, 1862.

pathy with the true nature and quality of the man, have presented the great English orator, jurist, statesman, and philosopher, in a very new light; but even these come far short of exhibiting a full and adequate picture of the learning, philosophy, purposes, and scope of this "learned Magician." Macaulay<sup>1</sup> could see nothing in him but a certain physical science of practical fruit; Delia Bacon<sup>2</sup> discovered in him a great deal more than Macaulay; Emerson,<sup>3</sup> more, perhaps, than Delia Bacon, finding that he ascended to the spring-head of all science; and Prof. Craik is certainly not so very far wrong when he says: "Bacon belongs not to mathematical or natural science, but to literature and to moral science in its most extensive acceptation — to the realm of imagination, of wit, of eloquence, of æsthetics, of history, of jurisprudence, of political philosophy, of logic, of metaphysics, and the investigation of the powers and operations of the human mind,"<sup>4</sup> and (as he might have added) "the order, operation, and Mind of Nature."<sup>5</sup>

Francis Bacon, son of the Lord-Keeper, Sir Nicholas Bacon, was born at York House in London, on the 22d day of January, 1561, and so was three years and three months older than William Shakespeare. In the thirteenth year of his age, he entered Trinity College, Cambridge, and in 1577, after enrolling his name at Gray's Inn for the sake of "ancienty," went with Sir Amias Paulet to the Court of Paris, where he remained until 1579, when, his father having suddenly died before having made such ample provision for this youngest son, as he had intended in due time, he was induced to return home, and began his terms at Gray's Inn, in June of that year, seeing now no better prospect before him than the profession of the law, with some

<sup>1</sup> *Essay on Bacon.*

<sup>2</sup> *Phil. of Shaks. Plays Unfolded*, Boston, 1857.

<sup>3</sup> *Representative Men.*

<sup>4</sup> *Hist. of Eng. Lit and Language*, by George L. Craik, LL. D. (New York, 1862,) I. 615.

<sup>5</sup> *Novum Organum.*

hope of preferment in the state; and on the 27th of June, 1582, he was called to the Utter Bar at the age of twenty-one. While in Paris, we may presume he had made himself master of the French language, and probably of the Italian and Spanish also, if not before, besides superadding to the manners of the English Court something of the polish of the French. On his return home, he was charged with bearing a diplomatic despatch to the virgin Queen, in which he was mentioned as "of great hope, and endued with many good and singular parts." In 1584, with the help of his uncle, Lord Burleigh, he is elected to Parliament for two boroughs, and, not much later, ventures to undertake a "Letter of Advice to Queen Elizabeth;" but in 1586, he is still living, "as it were, *in umbrâ*, and not in public or frequent action," and his bashful nature and studious seclusion are mistaken to his prejudice for pride and arrogance.<sup>1</sup> In 1587, when William Shakespeare is said to have come to London, Francis Bacon has become a Bencher, and sits at the Reader's table, in Gray's Inn, and, at the Christmas Revels of that year, he assists the Gentlemen of his Inn in getting up the tragedy of the "Misfortunes of Arthur," and certain masques and dumb-shows, for which he writes, at least, some "additional speeches," to be exhibited before the Queen at Greenwich,<sup>2</sup> while William Shakespeare is yet but a mere "servitor" at the Blackfriars, and still unsuspected of being the author of anything. In 1588-9, he is a member of Parliament for Liverpool, having already acquired an ascendancy as an orator in the House of Commons, and writes a paper on Church Controversies, and a draft of a letter for Secretary Walsingham on the conduct of the Queen's government towards Papists and Dissenters, under the supervision of the Archbishop, his old tutor at Cambridge. About the year 1590, he makes the acquaintance

<sup>1</sup> Spedding's *Letters and Life*, I. 59.

<sup>2</sup> Collier's *Hist. Dram. Poetry*, I. 267; Knight's *Biog. of Shakes.*, 326.



of the rising young Earl of Essex, also a Cambridge scholar, whose literary abilities, varied accomplishments, comprehensive views, and love for the liberal arts, were much in accord with his own. He pursues his studies at Gray's Inn, making an occasional visit to his mother's country-seat of Gorhambury, and for the vacations and greater intervals of leisure from Law and the Court, he has his retired and comfortable lodge at Twickenham Park, an estate of his brother Edward, delightfully situated on the Thames, near Twickenham (a place afterwards famous as the residence of Pope), where, as early as 1592, through the interest of his friend, the Earl of Essex, he has the honor of a visit from the Queen herself, and presents her with a Sonnet in compliment to that "generous nobleman;"<sup>1</sup> and here also, in after years, the Queen honors him with her presence, on various occasions, and frequent opportunities occur of addressing other Sonnets to his sovereign mistress's eyebrow, though professing (as he says in parenthesis) "not to be a poet." His habits are regular, frugal, and temperate, and his life pure, but he lives like a gentleman, a scholar, a member of Parliament and a courtier; and with comparatively little ready money and means rather in prospect than in possession, and with these expensive ways, he is at length compelled to get help from the Lombards and Jews. The Queen grants him the reversion of the Clerkship of the Star-Chamber, which, not coming into possession before 1608, was but as "another man's ground but tailing upon his house; which might mend his prospect but did not fill his barn." With little professional business, and no promotion coming, he ventures to address a letter (1592) to Lord Burghley, "the Atlas of this commonwealth," as he styles him, the "honour" of his house, and "the second founder" of his "poor estate," in which he says: "I wax now somewhat ancient one-and-thirty years is a great deal of sand in the hour

<sup>1</sup> Nichols' *Progresses of Q. Eliz.* (London, 1823), III. 190.

glass. My health, I thank God, I find confirmed; and I do not fear that action shall impair it, because I account my ordinary course of study and meditation to be more painful than most parts of action are. I ever bear a mind (in some middle place that I could discharge) to serve her Majesty; not as a man born under Sol, that loveth honour; nor under Jupiter, that loveth business, (for the contemplative planet carrieth me away wholly); but as a man born under an excellent Sovereign, that deserveth the dedication of all men's abilities. . . . Again the meanness of my estate doth somewhat move me; for though I cannot accuse myself that I am either prodigal or slothful, yet my health is not to spend, nor my course to get. Lastly, I confess that I have as vast contemplative ends as I have moderate civil ends; for I have taken all knowledge to be my province. . . . This, whether it be curiosity, or vain glory, or nature, or (if one take it favorably) *philanthropia*, is so fixed in my mind as it cannot be removed. . . . And if your Lordship will not carry me on, I will not do as Anaxagoras did, who reduced himself with contemplation to voluntary poverty; but this I will do: I will sell the inheritance that I have, and purchase some lease of quick revenue, or some office of gain that shall be executed by deputy, and so give over all care of service, and become some sorry book-maker, or a true pioneer in that mine of truth which (he said) lay so deep."<sup>1</sup> Not far from this time were written the speeches in Praise of the Queen and in Praise of Knowledge, doubtless intended for a Masque to be exhibited before her upon some occasion of which there is no record, further than that on the celebration of the Queen's day, in 1592, a *Device* was presented by Essex.<sup>2</sup> Not much later, we find him reading Virgil, Ovid, Horace, Seneca, the Psalms, the Proverbs, Erasmus' *Adagia*, and various French and Italian authors; in short, taking a survey of all the ancient and

<sup>1</sup> Spedding's *Letters and Life*, I. 108.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* I. 120.

modern learning, and making notes, abstracts, and a "Promus of Formularies and Elegancies." At the same time, Robert Greene discovers that a new poet has arisen, who is getting to be "the only Shake-scene in a country." He soon begins to be pestered with duns and Jews' bonds, and is "poor and sick, working for bread." His brother Anthony now occupies rooms in Gray's Inn, having returned in impaired health from his travels abroad, where he has even had a Papist in his service to the great horror of the good Lady Ann, his mother, a fiery, vehement, pious, grave, and affectionate soul, in creed a Calvinist, and in morals a Puritan of the stricter sect, who enjoins upon him to "use prayer twice in a day," and suggests that his brother Francis "is too negligent herein:" without religion, there is little to be expected for either of them from the orthodox Lord Treasurer. The good mother also begins to observe that Francis is "continually sickly, . . . by untimely going to bed, and then musing *nescio quid* when he should sleep." We get only an occasional glimpse of his private and secret studies, or of the exigencies that made them private.

In the mean time, he has made the acquaintance of the theatre-going young lords and courtiers, Essex, Southampton, Rutland, Montgomery, and the rest, and on the 18th of July, 1593, the Earl of Essex is on a visit of "three hours to Francis Bacon and his brother Anthony, at Twickenham Park," where he promises "to set up his whole rest of favour and credit" with the Queen for "Mr. Francis Bacon's preferment before Mr. Edward Coke."<sup>1</sup> He becomes attached to the party and service of the Earl of Essex, and is made his confidential friend, political counsellor, and legal adviser, in September following; and at the same time, his brother Anthony becomes Essex's Secretary. The "Venus and Adonis" was entered at Stationers' Hall in April, 1593, and was printed in the

<sup>1</sup> Nichols' *Prog. of Q. Eliz.*, III. 190, n. (2).



same year. The author (if it were Bacon) did not mean to profess to be a poet, and it is dedicated to the Earl of Southampton, under the name of William Shakespeare; and the "Rape of Lucrece," entered in May, 1594, soon follows. Some eight or ten of the earlier plays are already upon the stage, and are generally taken to be the work of William Shakespeare, though none of them have been as yet printed under his name; but Greene and Chettle have uttered their sharp protest against the pretensions of this "upstart crow beautified with our feathers," denouncing him as "an absolute *Johannes factotum*" and "the only Shake-scene in a countrey." It is in August, 1594, that we get some further insight into the more intimate relations of these theatre-loving associates, learning from the letters of Lady Ann Bacon, first made public by Mr. Dixon, that they are having plays performed at Anthony's house, near the Bull Inn, "very much to the delight of Essex and his jovial crew" (of whom Southampton is, of course, one), but as the pious Lady Ann fears, "to the peril of her sons' souls;" for plays and novels are burnt privately by the Bishops, and publicly by the Puritans.

In the beginning of 1593, Bacon made that celebrated speech on the Subsidy, which boldly sustained the privilege of Parliament, but defeated Burghley, and so deeply offended the Queen, that he was denied access at Court for the next three years; though after much solicitation of his friends, and being too great a favorite with her Majesty to be wholly cast off, she had so far relented by the month of June, 1594, as to employ him as her counsel (*verbi reg. Eliz.*) in some legal business. Nevertheless, Essex undertook to make good his engagement of his "whole rest of favour and credit" to secure his preferment to the place of Attorney-General before "Mr. Edward Coke." Cecil said it was useless to think of office, when he was denied access at the palace. Another ob-

jection was, that he had had but little or no practice in the courts; and to obviate this, he began to appear more frequently in court in the spring of 1594, arguing a number of causes with great learning and eloquence, so that Mr. Gosnold, who heard him, observing how he "spangled his speech" with "unusual words," was persuaded that the "Bacon would be too hard for the Cook"; but Coke, as Speaker of the House, had bowed to her Majesty's prerogative, taking care on nearly all occasions to give satisfaction, and not offence, and was made Attorney-General, the "Cook" proving too hard for the Bacon. The Solicitorship still remained. Essex, Egerton, Burghley, Cecil, Greville, and a host of friends, continued to press his suit for this "second place," from March, 1594, until November, 1595; but the Queen was in "no haste to determine of the place." Bacon, whose "nature can take no evil ply," having been "raised with great expectation," and "with the wishes of most men to the higher place," cannot but conclude with himself "that no man ever read a more exquisite disgrace."<sup>1</sup> He nearly resolves, "with this disgrace" of his fortune, to retire "with a couple of men to Cambridge," and there spend his life in "studies and contemplations, without looking back." Essex still presses the matter upon every opportunity. When the Queen visits him, she answers that "she did not come for that," and "stops his mouth;" and when he visits her, she acknowledges he had a great wit, and an excellent gift of speech, and much other good learning, but in law she rather thought he could show to the uttermost of his knowledge, and was not deep; and she shows "her dislike of the suit" as well as he his "affection in it," and thinks, "if there were a yielding, it was

<sup>1</sup> Letter to Essex (1594), *Works* (Mont.), XII. 179. Here I prefer the reading of Montagu. Mr. Spedding, taking the word *read* to be the abbreviation *rec'd*, writes *received*; but it is more probably the same Baconian idiom, which appears again in the *Henry VIII.* thus: "and read the perfect ways of honour." — *Letters and Life*, by Spedding, I. 291.

fitter to be" of his side.<sup>1</sup> After July, however, he is employed as Queen's counsel, but when the Solicitorship is named (says Essex), "she did fly the tilt," and would not see him. The unfortunate Subsidy Speech could not be forgiven, and the matter hangs for a long time undetermined. Bacon keeps his terms at Gray's Inn, but spends the greater part of his time at Twickenham Park, or at Essex's house, where he is rapt in secret studies and philosophic contemplations; and at the same time, both Essex and himself are busy in all suitable ways, plying their arts to regain the Queen's favor. Though deeply in debt, at this time, Bacon offers her the present of a rich and costly jewel, which she declines to accept; thus, thinks Greville, almost pronouncing sentence of despair. In December, 1594, the Christmas Revels at Gray's Inn come on. They are gotten up with extraordinary magnificence, this year, and the whole Court are most sumptuously and splendidly entertained with plays, masques, triumphs, and dumb shows. Lady Ann Bacon writes to Anthony, that she "trusts they will not mum, nor mask, nor sinfully revel"; but Francis, as before in 1587, and on other later occasions, takes a leading part in the preparations, writing a Masque, for one thing, which Mr. Spedding finds to be undoubtedly his work, and certain humorous Regulations for "the Heroical Order of the Helmet," and other pieces, which Mr. Spedding rather thinks not his work; and upon this same occasion, the Shakespearean "Comedy of Errors" makes its first appearance upon any stage, pretty certainly also the work of Francis Bacon (as I will endeavor to show). In this year 1594, the "Titus Andronicus" is first entered at Stationers' Hall, and the second part of the "Henry VI." (then styled the "Contention of the Two Houses of York and Lancaster") is first printed, and the third part (then styled the "True Tragedy of the Duke of York"), follows in 1595; but they had been written long before.

<sup>1</sup> Essex to Bacon, (18 May, 1594).—*Letters and Life*, by Spedding, I. 297.



Bacon continues to be assiduously engaged with his public avocations and his private studies. Whether from the mortification of disappointment or the effect of midnight musings when he should be asleep, the good mother observes, again, that "inward secret grief hindereth his health," and "everybody saith he looks thin and pale." Moreover, when her ladyship is applied to for assistance in the way of meeting his pecuniary obligations, she breaks out furiously upon "that bloody Percy," and "that Jones," as "proud, profane, costly fellows, whose being about him," she verily believes, "the Lord God doth mislike." This was his servant Henry Percy, in whose charge he left his manuscripts by his will. The particular ground of Lady Ann's dislike of his men, more than that they were expensive, does not appear; but she insinuates that "he hath nourished most sinful proud villains wilfully."

During the year 1595, he lives for the most part in the shady retirement of Twickenham Park, amidst his books and flower-gardens, abandoning the Court altogether. At length he concludes that he was taking "duty too exactly," and not "according to the dregs of this age," and fearing lest his unwonted seclusion should be interpreted to his prejudice at the palace, he addresses a letter to the Lord-Keeper Puckering, on the 25th of May, 1595, desiring him to apologize to her Majesty for the "nine days' wonder" of his absence; for, as the letter proceeds, "it may be, when her Majesty hath tried others, she will think of him that she hath cast aside. For I will take it upon that which her Majesty hath often said, that she doth reserve me, and not reject me."<sup>1</sup> And in July, the Queen, as if to keep his courage up, or in recognition of his professional services, bestows on him the estate of Pitts; but as to the Solicitorship, it is probable that the Cecils and the Lord-Keeper Puckering, having at their service any number of Brograves, Branthwaytes, and black-letter Flemings, not

<sup>1</sup> *Letters and Life*, by Spedding, I. 360.

connected with a rival party, have fixed all that, and she will hear no more of it. The jealousy of the Cecils, or Essex, or the Subsidy Speech which Burghley thinks to be the chief difficulty, and which Bacon still justifies rather than retracts, finally mars all, and it is decided, at last, that Sergeant Fleming, whose best qualification seems to have been the negative one of standing in nobody's way, though admitted by Bacon himself not to be any such "insufficient obscure idole man," as that his appointment could justly be taken as a personal affront, shall be made Solicitor; and again, "no man ever read a more exquisite disgrace" than Francis Bacon. He cannot refrain from uttering a little indignation against the Lord Keeper for "failing him and crossing him now in the conclusion, when friends are best tried"; but he takes care to give no offence to the Queen. In October, he writes to the Lord Keeper again: "I am now at Twicknam Park, where I think to stay; for her Majesty placing a Solicitor, my travail shall not need in her causes; though whensoever her Majesty shall like to employ me in any particular, I shall be ready to do her willing service."<sup>1</sup> Again he is almost persuaded to abandon a public life, to sell his inheritance, to spend some time in travels abroad, and finally to become a sorry book-maker, or a pioneer in Anaxagoras' deep mine. "For to be as I told you," he writes to Greville, "like a child following a bird, which when he is nearest flieth away and lighteth a little before, and then the child after it again, and so *in infinitum*, I am weary of it," —

"Applying fears to hopes, and hopes to fears,  
Still losing when I saw myself to win." — *Sonnet cxix.*

Among the objections urged against him, it was represented that he was a man given to "speculations" rather than business, and that he had not devoted himself to the practice of law, and he himself believed that her Majesty's impression against him was due less to her remembrance of

<sup>1</sup> Letter (11 Oct. 1595); *Letters and Life*, by Spedding, I. 368

his Subsidy Speech than to "her conceit otherwise" of his "insufficiency:"<sup>1</sup>

———"then no more remains

But that, to your sufficiency,—as your worth is able,—

And let them work."—*Measure for Measure*, Act I. Sc. 1.

It is plain that his time and attention were mainly given to philosophical and literary studies. In this same letter he admits to Burghley, "It is true, my life hath been so private as I have had no means to do your Lordship service." And in October, again, he writes in a letter to Essex, touching this matter of his promotion in the State: "For means I value that most; and the rather because I am purposed not to follow the practice of the law: (If her Majesty command me in any particular, I shall be ready to do her willing service;) and my reason is only, because it drinketh too much time, which I have dedicated to better purposes. But even for that point of estate and means, I partly lean to Thales' opinion, *That a philosopher may be rich if he will.*"<sup>2</sup>

On the 5th of November 1595, Fleming receives his commission as Solicitor-General, and, some twelve days afterwards, the Queen further solaces the disappointment of Bacon with the grant of the reversion of Twickenham Park itself. He becomes fully reconciled to her favor, and his hopes revive. During the same month, Essex prepares a magnificent entertainment for her Majesty at his own house, and Bacon writes a Masque for the occasion. It is not far from this time that Essex bestows upon Bacon, in requital of his friendship and his personal services, an estate worth £1800, including, says Nichols, "a highly ornamented mansion, particularly celebrated for its pleasure-grounds, which were called the Garden of Paradise."<sup>3</sup> And it was not long before this time that Southampton, according to a tradition handed down by Rowe from Sir

<sup>1</sup> *Letter to Burghley* (7 June, 1595); *Letters and Life*, by Spedding, I. 362.

<sup>2</sup> Spedding's *Letters and Life*, I. 372.

<sup>3</sup> *Prog. Q. Eliz.*, III. 191.



William Davenant, is said to have bestowed upon Shakespeare the munificent gift of £1000, which might (with Halliwell) be deemed almost incredible, unless (as Collier supposes) the money (whatever the sum) was in fact a contribution for the building of the Globe Theatre, which was erected in 1594.

In 1596, the "Romeo and Juliet" appears, and the "King John" had been written, not long before this date. William Shakespeare had been for some time a sharer in the Globe and Blackfriars, and, as the traditions say, now kept his lodgings near the Bear Garden in Southwark. In the next year, he is able to purchase New Place at Stratford-on-Avon, and appears to have been quite extensively engaged in agricultural operations and various kinds of traffic, while the "Richard II.," the "Richard III.," and the "Merchant of Venice," were getting ready for the stage. Bacon dedicates his "Maxims of the Law" to "Her Sacred Majesty," writes his Advice to Essex, and drafts for Essex the letters of Advice to Greville and to Rutland on his Travels. He is also regularly employed as Queen's Counsel, and, in the intervals of business in London, is diligently engaged "at Twickenham," on his "Colours of Good and Evil," and his "Meditationes Sacre." His smaller works are the "recreations" of his other studies, and, as we learn from his letter to Mountjoy, it is now "his manner and rule to keep state in contemplative matters."<sup>1</sup> The first edition of the Essays, which had strayed from their master in manuscript, and were in danger of falling into the hands of the printers, is published by himself early in 1597, in anticipation of surreptitious copies; but scarcely two years later, a collection of sonnets and minor poems, which appear to have strayed in like manner from their author, did happen to come into the hands of Jaggard, afterwards printer of the Essays, and got surreptitiously

<sup>1</sup> Spedding's *Preface to the Colours of Good and Evil*, Works (Boston), XIII. 262.

printed, as it would seem. Though now encouraged by the increasing favor of the Queen and his successes in Parliament (in which he has become a powerful leader), he is still troubled on account of "the meanness" of his estate; and his biographers suggest that it was for this reason, among others, that he sought the hand of the rich and beautiful Lady Hatton, now a lovely young widow, and a daughter of Sir Thomas Cecil, eldest son of Lord Burghley; but the Cecils were still awake, and more set upon advancing a serviceable instrument of their own party than the friend and counsellor of Essex, who, if too far promoted in this direction, might at length rival the pretensions of his cousin, Sir Robert Cecil, to the higher places in the state, and they prevailed on the young lady, much against her own inclination, to marry the crabbed Attorney-General Coke, a widower of forty-six, with a large practice, an immense fortune, and perhaps more than the eleven objections, ten children and himself, —

"Was ever woman in this humour woo'd?

Was ever woman in this humour won?"

*Richard III., Act I. Sc. 2.*

Between 1596 and 1600, the "Richard II.," the "Richard III.," the "Merchant of Venice," the "Much Ado About Nothing," the two parts of the "Henry IV.," the "Henry V.," and the "Merry Wives of Windsor," make their appearance upon the stage; and it is no wonder, perhaps, that we find it recorded in the history of the time, that Southampton, Rutland, and the rest of Essex's jovial crew, "pass away their time in London merely in going to plays every day." But Bacon himself, though his published works were gaining for him an eminent reputation at home and abroad, and his practice at the bar was increasing, and his prospects brightening, had the misfortune still to be arrested for debt by "the Lombard"; and he was actually "confined in a spunging-house" (according to the taunt of Coke), before he could get out of the Shylock's clutches.

At the same time, he is making eloquent speeches in Parliament, and carrying bills for "the increase of husbandry and tillage" and "the increase of people"; and the Queen acknowledges his public services, and signifies her continuing personal favor by making him a liberal grant of the Rectory and Church of Cheltenham and the Chapel of Charlton Kings, with the lands and revenues thereto belonging.

Now comes on the affair of Ireland and the Essex treason. As early as 1597, Essex, receiving from Bacon wiser counsel than he liked, touching his military ambition and his sinister courses, ceases to come to Gray's Inn for advice; but takes to the Jesuits and the scheme of going to Ireland, and at length deposing the Queen from her throne. He makes a treasonable truce with the rebel Tyrone, and suddenly returns home without orders, in September 1599, much to the surprise and indignation of the Queen; and shortly afterwards he is put under arrest at the Lord Keeper's house. During these years, the play of "Richard II." has had a great run upon the stage, and received the special countenance of Essex, Southampton, and their associates; and two editions have been printed, but with the scene "containing the deposing of a king" left out; and in 1599, Dr. Hayward's pamphlet of the "First Yeare of King Henry the Fourth," which was a studied and treasonable adaptation of the story of Bolingbroke and King Richard the Second to the present state of affairs, being printed with a dedication to the Earl of Essex, arouses the anger of the Queen, and adds to the alarm already awakened in her mind by the theatres and the play. Hayward is sent straight to the Tower. Essex makes all haste to call in the book, and to suppress the dedication; but the forbidden thing was much sought after. Not long after this, and while Essex is under arrest, and Bacon, in sundry interviews with the Queen, is still interceding in his behalf, her Majesty brings up against him this affair of Dr



Hayward's book, and also, as it would seem, distinctly flings at Bacon himself about "a matter which grew from him, but went after about in others' names," being, in fact, no other than the play itself; but this will be made the subject of special notice below.

From this time until he became Attorney-General in 1613, while pursuing his public labors, he is still continuing in private, like Prospero in the play, his secret studies and the liberal arts in his "poor cell" at Gray's Inn, or in his lodge at Twickenham Park, or at the charming country-seat of Gorhambury, which fell to him on the death of his brother Anthony in 1604, where his taste for elegant studies, his delight in beautiful gardens, and his love for the Muses find ample gratification. Sometime after the death of the Queen in 1603, he takes pains to record her praises, signalizing her happy reign in the "*In Felicem Memoriam Elizabethæ*"; for this "silver-tongued Melicert" will surely not fail, like the ungrateful subject of Chettle's spleen, to

"Drop from his honied muse one sable teare,  
To mourn her death that gracéd his desert,  
And to his laies open'd her royall eare";

as witness also the numerous sonnets to her addressed, the masques written for her entertainment, the graceful compliment in the "*Midsummer Night's Dream*," and that handsome tribute to her memory which is contained in the last act of the "*Henry VIII.*"

His speeches in Parliament have an eye to the welfare of the kingdom, and he is popular with the people, being sometimes elected for two or three boroughs at once; and, on the coming in of the new sovereign, he is for the first time regularly appointed King's Counsel, is knighted by King James in 1604, and, in 1606, in the forty-sixth year of his age, having found a maiden to his mind, he marries the pretty Miss Barnham, with £220 a year, being now able to settle upon her £500 a year out of his own income, though

he has lately had in pawn "a jewell of Susannah set with diamonds and rubies." In 1605-6, certain acts of Parliament are passed against witches, and Ben Jonson, Chapman, and Marston are sent to jail by the sublime author of the treatise on "Dæmonologie and Witchcraft," for jesting on the Scots. William Shakespeare quits acting upon the stage, buys a lease of one half of the Tythes of Stratford-on-Avon, and is planting a mulberry-tree at New Place, when he should be writing the "Macbeth" and the "Lear." The "Macbeth," written somewhere in these years, takes a more flattering view of the Scots and of the doctrine of witches, and Shakespeare has the good fortune to escape the fate of his brother poets; and the Christmas revels of the year 1606, at Whitehall, bring out the great play of "Lear," for his Majesty's special entertainment. Bacon again expects the Solicitor's place, but is defeated by a trick of Cecil elevating Coke and Hobart; but, at last, in 1607, having made his great speech on the Union of Scotland, much to the satisfaction of the King, he is made Solicitor-General, in June, with "the promise of a place of profit" in due time.

Not long after this event, the wonderful comedy of "Troilus and Cressida," in a rather surprising manner, makes its escape from the "grand possessors' wills," as we have already had occasion to notice. In 1607-8, Bacon is engaged upon his "Characters of Julius and Augustus Cæsar"; and, by some marvellous accident, the tragedy of "Julius Cæsar" comes from the hand of Shakespeare very soon after, as if there were at least a "semblable coherence" between the two men's spirits. Writing to Mr. Tobie Matthew, about this time, concerning his "Happy Memory of the late Queen," Bacon says: "I showed you some model, though at that time methought you were as willing to hear Julius Cæsar as Queen Elizabeth commended."

In 1610, Shakespeare finally retires to Stratford, and

akes to his old trade, suing John Addenbrook and Thomas Horneby for 24s. On the 20th of April in this year, the "Macbeth" is performed at the Globe for the first time that we know. The Earls of Southampton, Pembroke, and Montgomery, together with Sir Francis Bacon, are now fellow-members of the Virginia Company, which sends out Somers's fleet to the West Indies, to be terribly vexed by storms on the voyage, and the good ship *Admiral* is wrecked upon the Bermudas; of which a thrilling account soon after appeared in Jourdan's "Discovery of the Bermudas, otherwise called the Isle of Devils"; and it is just after, in 1611, that we first hear of the "Tempest," the "born devil" Caliban, and "the still-vex'd Bermoodies," which, we are to believe, have occupied the leisure of William Shakespeare in the intervals of his economical avocations and his social converse with his Stratford neighbors. In 1612, on the death of his perfidious friend Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, Bacon is named by the liberal party for Secretary of State. This failing, however, he desires to have the Mastership of the Wards; but Sir Thomas Cope steps in, and buys the place at an enormous price. It is in this year, too, as is worthy of note, that Bartholomew Legate is burnt for Arian heresy, and King James in person writes a fulmination against the heretic Vorstius away over in Holland. With Bacon, business is now becoming more laborious, but the "Intellectual Globe" is written, and the "Novum Organum" progresses: "My great work goeth forward." Toward the close of the year, the long-protracted festivities attending the nuptials of the Princess Elizabeth, shortly to become Queen of Bohemia, began with the performance at Court of the "Winter's Tale" and the "Tempest," and ended only with the magnificent tragedy of "Henry VIII.," in June 1613; and in October following, Sir Edward Coke is raised to the King's Bench, very little to his own satisfaction, and Sir Francis Bacon, having sometime before received the "royal promise to succeed," be-



comes Attorney-General, at the age of fifty-two, and the plays certainly cease to appear:—

"All your doing, Mr. Attorney," says Coke. Bacon "Your Lordship all this while has grown in breadth; you must needs now grow in height, or you will be a monster."

In these years also, the "Apology concerning Essex" (1604), the speeches touching Purveyors and on the King's Messages, the "Advancement of Learning" (1605), the "Office of Constables" (1608), and the "Wisdom of the Ancients" (1609-10), were written, or finished, and some new editions of the Essays published; and during the same period were written the greater plays of this author (these recreations of his other studies, perhaps): the "As You Like it," the "Twelfth Night," the "Hamlet," the "Measure for Measure," the "Lear," the "Julius Cæsar," the "Troilus and Cressida," the "Macbeth," the "Othello," the "Cymbeline," the "Tempest," the "Winter's Tale," the "Henry VIII.," and lastly (if they were in fact finished before Bacon's fall from power), the "Coriolanus," the "Anthony and Cleopatra," and the "Timon of Athens."

It may be briefly added further, that, between 1613 and 1621, Bacon was occupied with his graver philosophical labors and his public employments, in the full enjoyment of the royal favor, political power, and great fame. In 1616 the year of Shakespeare's death, the grand trial of the Judges on the question of the King's prerogative came up before the King in person. The Lord Chancellor (Elsmere) and the King decide for Bacon's opinion against that of the Judges, who, all but Coke, finally yielded the point. Coke, overruled, has to eat his words, being for once "clearly in the wrong," says Blackstone,<sup>1</sup> and is subsequently deposed from the King's Bench. In reply to his many assaults, Bacon addresses him a letter expostulatory: "Like a true friend, though far unworthy to be counted so, to shew you your true shape in a glass, and that not in a

<sup>1</sup> 3 Black. Comm., 54.

false one to flatter you, nor yet in one that should make you seem worse than you are."

On taking his seat in Chancery (March 7, 1617), he delivers an admirable speech on the duties of the Chancellor, and there is immense parade on the occasion, of which he says afterwards, in a private letter, "There was much ado and a great deal of world, . . . hell to me, or purgatory at least." Not long after, however, the indefatigable Coke, grim and fierce, but wise as a serpent, conceives the scheme of buying up the whole Villiers family by sacrificing his own daughter on the altar of court-favor and ambitious intrigue; a scheme also by Lord Campbell (and all disciples of the Cokean doctrine of the industrious money-getting chief end of man) deemed to be "a masterly stroke of policy,"<sup>1</sup> and one that would, as it were, hoist Bacon with his own petard; but the Lady Coke, for whom Bacon feels some sympathy, runs away with the girl into the country, and keeps her shut up in a castle. Coke applies to the Lord Keeper (Bacon) for a warrant to seize her, which Bacon properly enough refuses, and advises the King against the marriage, until, much to his amazement, he finds that both the King and Buckingham (or Buckingham, and of course the King) are deep in the plot. He is even "suffered to remain in an antechamber among lacqueys, seated on an old wooden box," holding the purse of the Great Seal in his hand, and is threatened with immediate downfall, until he will submit to the whims of the prime-favorite, and hold his peace about this iniquitous marriage, barely escaping with his office, while Coke becomes a Privy Councillor. This thing over for the present, he is made Lord Chancellor and Baron Verulam in 1618, publishes the "*Novum Organum*" in 1620, dedicated to the King, and becomes Viscount St. Alban, January 27, 1621. Parliament met a few days afterwards all furious for reform. Bacon himself had advised the calling of a parlia-

<sup>1</sup> Lord Campbell's *Lives of the Chanc.*, II. 312.

ment as a remedy for the public evils ; and Coke, turned " flaming patriot," is a member, and immediately begins on " bribery and corruption " in high places, hitting at Bacon first of all ; and Buckingham, adventurer Cranfield, scent-hound Churchill, Dean Williams, high priest of the *summum bonum*, and all the Villiers harpies, the mother of them inclusive, who already imagines she has the aforesaid Dean by the coat-tail, join the cry, and fall to work. Bacon, warned to look about him, answers : " I look above." But seeing that there was no help for it now, he concluded to lean upon the King, and depend upon his personal friendship and sovereign power alone to save him from total ruin, or worse ; and so gave up the seals, and made a clear submission and a formal confession. In May following, he received sentence, was fined £40,000, disqualified from holding office, sent to the Tower during the King's pleasure (which was not long), and banished London (the verge of the Court). He retires to his books and gardens at Gorhambury, and, by the next October, the " History of Henry VII.," begun long before, is finished, and submitted to " the file of his Majesty's judgment." <sup>1</sup> In April 1622, a copy of the " History of Henry VII." is presented to the Queen of Bohemia, the fair Princess for whose nuptials the " Winter's Tale " had been written ; and the " History of Henry VIII.," beginning " like a fable of the poets," is commenced but never finished. In the mean time, Buckingham and Cranfield (now Lord Treasurer) are pressing for the spoils of their late victory, until by November, the faithful Secretary Meautys begins to think they " have such a savage word among them as *fleeing*." <sup>2</sup> Buckingham is set upon having York House. At first, Bacon replies : " York House is the house wherein my father died, and wherein I first breathed ; and there will I yield my last breath, if so please God, and the King will

<sup>1</sup> Letter to the King, March 22, 1622.

<sup>2</sup> Letter, *Works* (Mont.), XII. 430 ; (Philad.), III. 146.



give me leave; though I be now by fortune (as the old proverb is) like a bear in a monk's hood."<sup>1</sup> But, seeing that the King would not give him leave against the favorite, York House had to go, in the end, and Bacon is left in debt, struggling with penury, until at length his fine is made over to him; but he insists upon driving a showy equipage when he goes abroad, and, says Prince Charles, meeting him on the road in full trim, "will not go out in a snuff." During the autumn of 1622, his letters are addressed from Bedford House in London. Buckingham is still grasping after his "house at Gorhambury" and his "forest" there. At first, he had answered, "I will not be stripped of my feathers"; but, by the 5th of February, 1623, he has made up his mind to submit to the necessities of his fate, and writes to Buckingham of that date: "And for my house at Gorhambury, I do infinitely desire your lordship should have it."<sup>2</sup> And having made this last sacrifice, about the first of March, 1623, he returns to his old lodgings in Gray's Inn, where he continues to be "shut up," says Lord Campbell, "like a cloistered friar." In October of the same year, the "*De Augmentis*" is published with a dedication to Buckingham, as if that might still further appease him; and he ventures to solicit the Provostship of Eton, "a pretty cell for my fortune" (as he expresses it), and is refused; "for," he continues, "I hope I shall be found a man humbled as a Christian, but not dejected as a worldling."<sup>3</sup> The "*History of Life and Death*," written in Latin, is now published; and it is sometime during this same year that the Folio edition of the Plays first sees the light. The entry on the Stationers' Register bears date the 8th November, 1623; but one copy is said to exist, having the date 1622 upon the title-page; whence it may be inferred that the

<sup>1</sup> Letter, *Works* (Mont.), XII. 420, 436.

<sup>2</sup> Letter, *Works* (Philad.), III. 147.

<sup>3</sup> Letter to Oxford (Feb. 2, 1623-4); *Works* (Mont.), XI. 456; (Philad.), III. 154.

work had been begun, if not entirely completed, in *that* year.

Somewhere between 1623 and 1626, his sentence is fully pardoned; and Coke, Cranfield, Williams, and others, disciples of the Cokean doctrine of the chief end of man, who had been instrumental in pulling Bacon down, now fall themselves, some with Coke himself into the Tower, and some into the lowest deeps. Bacon continues his labors at Gray's Inn (when not too sick to work) upon the "Great Instauration," the "Apothegms," the "Holy War," the "Natural History," the "New Atlantis," the Essays, and the Psalms, with the assistance, at times, of Meautys, Matthew, Rawley, Hobbes, Ben Jonson, and George Herbert; for poets and philosophers and divines alike appear to have had a singular admiration and affection for this "Chancellor of Parnassus," of whom Ben Jonson never repented of having written these lines, nor ever recanted a word or syllable of them, characterizing him as —

"England's high Chancellor, the destined heir,  
In his soft cradle, to his father's chair,  
Whose even thread the Fates spin round and full  
Out of their choicest and their whitest wool."

A new edition of the Essays, with twenty new ones added, and among them (as it may be well to note) the Essay of the "Vicissitude of Things," is printed in 1625; the "Metrical Versions of the Psalms of David" are dedicated to George Herbert, "as the best judge of Divinity and Poesy met;" and he dies on the 9th of April, 1626, saying in his will: "For my name and memory I leave it to men's charitable speeches, and to foreign nations, and the next ages."

There was less occasion, perhaps, than has been generally supposed, that he should leave it by his will either to the one or to the other; for his own contemporaries were not wholly blind to his superiority, whether in the powers of the intellect or of the imagination, in the extent of his

learning or in the nobility of his nature and character, in the splendor of his genius or in the greatness of his works. Though no account remains to tell us what unusual state attended his funeral, we know that his faithful secretary, Thomas Meautys, who erected a fitting monument over him in St. Michael's Church, near St. Albans, where he was buried by the side of his mother (as he had himself desired) "within the walls of Old Verulam," whereon he inscribed him the Light of Science and the Law of Eloquence, whom he had worshipped living, and admired when dead, was by no means the only one to cast a flower upon his grave. Numerous tributes to his memory immediately appeared. Some of them have been preserved in the Harleian Miscellanies, elegantly written in Latin, and though for the most part anonymous, evidently by men of learning and genius, who knew how to appreciate his worth even as a son of Apollo, as witness these few lines of extract:—

"Constat, Aprile uno te potuisse mori:  
Ut flos hinc lacrymis, illinc Philomela querelis  
Deducant linguæ funera sola tuæ.

GEORGIUS HERBERT."

"Crudelis nunquam vère prius Atropos: orbem  
Totum habeas, Phœbum tu modo redde meum.

Hei mihi! nec cælum, nec mors, nec musa (Bacone)  
Obstabant fati, nec mea vota tuis."

"Ah nunquam vère infelix prius ipse Apollo!  
Unde illi qui sic illum amet alter erit?

Ah numerum non est habitum; jamque necesse est,  
Contentus musis ut sit Apollo novem."

Marmore Pieridum gelido Phœbique choragum  
Inhumané patis, stultæ viator? abi:

Fallere: jam rutilo Verulamia fulget Olympo:  
Sidere splendet aper magne Jacobi tuo.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Harl. Misc.*, X. 288-295.



We know when Bacon's acknowledged works were published, and also in what years many of them were chiefly written; but some of them occupied his mind more or less during many years or nearly all his life, and materials were always accumulating on his hands; and some of them were composed in whole or in part long before they were printed. But most of these plays were no doubt produced on the stage very soon after they were written; and, although it may not be possible to fix with precision the exact dates at which they were composed, in all cases, the facts known concerning them enable us to assign a hither limit to their appearance with positive certainty in nearly every instance; and this will be sufficient for the purpose in hand. The researches of later critics have considerably modified the chronological order of Malone and older writers, and they furnish data on which a near approximation to the date of composition, in the majority of instances, can be attained. On these and such other lights as we have, the following order, with the nearest dates, may be accepted, perhaps, as a very close approach to the truth.

#### CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF THE PLAYS.

##### I. PERIOD. — 1582-1593.

Titus Andronicus.	Love's Labor 's Lost.
Pericles (first sketch).	All 's Well That Ends Well.
Henry VI., 3 Parts (first sketches).	(Venus and Adonis. Printed 1593.)
Taming of the Shrew (first sketch).	(Rape of Lucrece. Printed 1594.)
Two Gentlemen of Verona.	

##### II. PERIOD. — 1594-1600.

Written	Written
Midsummer Night's Dream..1594	1 Henry IV. ....1598
Comedy of Errors .....1594	2 Henry IV. ....1598
Romeo and Juliet.....1595	Much Ado About Nothing...1599
King John.....1595	Merry Wives of Windsor....1599
Richard II.....1596	Henry V.....1599
Richard III.....1596-7	As You Like It.....1600
Merchant of Venice.....1597	

## III. PERIOD. — 1601-1611.

Written	Written
Twelfth Night.....1601	Coriolanus.....1608
Hamlet.....1602	Cymbeline.....1609
Measure for Measure.....1603-4	Winter's Tale.....1610
Lear.....1606	Tempest.....1611
Julius Caesar.....1607	Othello.....1612-1613
Troilus and Cressida.....1608	Henry VIII.....1613-14
Antony and Cleopatra.....1608	Timon of Athens.....1613-1614
Macbeth.....1605-1609	

## PLAYS PRINTED BEFORE THE FOLIO OF 1623.

Printed	Printed
Romeo and Juliet.....1597	2 Henry IV.....1600
Richard II.....1597	Much Ado About Nothing.....1600
Richard III.....1597	Henry V.....1600
Love's Labor's Lost.....1600	Hamlet.....1611-12
1 Henry IV.....1600	Lear.....1608
Titus Andronicus.....1600	Pericles (not in the Folio).....1609
A Midsummer Night's Dream.....1600	Troilus and Cressida.....1609
Merchant of Venice.....1600	Othello.....1612

## PLAYS FIRST PRINTED IN THE FOLIO OF 1623.

## EARLIER WORKS.

Taming of the Shrew. <sup>1</sup>	All's Well That Ends Well.
Two Gentlemen of Verona.	Comedy of Errors.
1 Henry VI.	King John.
2 and 3 Henry VI. <sup>2</sup>	Merry Wives of Windsor. <sup>3</sup>

## LATER WORKS.

As You Like It.	Coriolanus.
Twelfth Night.	Cymbeline.
Measure for Measure.	Winter's Tale.
Julius Caesar.	Tempest.
Antony and Cleopatra.	Henry VIII.
Macbeth.	Timon of Athens.

Thus it appears that the period of time in which these plays and poems were produced corresponds exactly to that portion of Bacon's life in which we may most easily sup-

<sup>1</sup> First printed in the present form: an older form printed in 1594.

<sup>2</sup> First in complete form: only first sketches before.

<sup>3</sup> First in complete form: only a sketch before.

pose they could have been written by him, being the period of thirty-one years between his coming to the bar, in 1582 and his elevation to the principal law-office of the crown, in 1613, and between the ages of twenty-one and fifty-two. During the first twenty-five years of this time, and until made Solicitor-General, in 1607, he was looking in vain for advancement in the state, getting none beyond a seat in Parliament, which came from the people, and the small employment of a Queen's (or King's) Counsel, both places of honor rather than profit; and was a barrister, a close student, and a bachelor at his lodgings in Gray's Inn, with distressingly little professional business and much leisure for writing and for study, spending his vacations in the quiet retreats of Gorhambury and Twickenham Park; a constant attendant upon the Court, a friend and counsellor of the favorite Essex, and an intimate associate of his gay young compeers, Southampton, Rutland, Pembroke, and Montgomery, who were constant visitors of the theatre, some of them great patrons of learning, and themselves amateurs in poetry, and all of them patrons and lovers of the liberal arts.

All the while, Francis Bacon was intent upon his legal studies, his parliamentary duties, his scientific inquiries, his civil and moral Essays, his "Wisdom of the Ancients," his "Advancement of Learning," and those philosophical speculations and instaurationes which were his "graver studies," together with sundry unnamed "recreations" of his other studies; being thus, at the same time, engaged in writing various works in prose (if not in verse also) on subjects which, in a general view, and in their main matter and scope, are found to be essentially kindred and parallel with these very plays. In his dedication of the "Dialogue Touching a Holy War" (itself not without some touch of the Shakespearean faculty), addressed to the learned Bishop Andrews, in 1622, he tells us that these smaller works, such as the Essays, and "some other particulars of that nature,"



being perhaps a part of those "particular exchanges" in which he had hitherto been given, had been and would continue to be "the recreations of his other studies;" but they must now give way to the more important philosophical labors and those "banks and mounts of perpetuity which will not break"; for on these he was henceforth to be more exclusively employed; "though I am not ignorant," says he, "that those kind of writings would with less pains and embracement (perhaps) yield more lustre and reputation to my name than those other which I have in hand."<sup>1</sup>

Nor is there anything remarkable in the circumstance that a barrister of the Inns of Court should be a poet and write for the stage. John Ford of Gray's Inn, and Francis Beaumont of the Inner Temple, were both lawyers and eminent dramatic writers; the Christmas Revels at these Inns were celebrated with masques, triumphs, and stage-plays; plays were written by eminent scholars and divines to be performed on festive occasions, even at the Universities; Thomas Sackville Lord Buckhurst, and Foulke Greville Lord Brooke, were poets, and wrote plays; Sir Henry Wotton, sometime secretary of the Earl of Essex, also wrote plays; William, Earl of Pembroke, like the celebrated Sir Philip Sidney, was a cultivator of the art of poetry; Dr. John Donne, a great philosopher and divine, as well as George Herbert, the "best judge of divinity and poesy met," and Sir John Davies, a distinguished lawyer and judge, are named as founders of the metaphysical school of poetry of that day;<sup>2</sup> and that great scholar and writer, John Selden of the Inner Temple, though not himself a poet, was such a critic, philosopher, and man, as to command the esteem and confidence of Lord Bacon, who named him in his will as one eminently fit to sit in judgment upon his unpublished manuscripts. Nor is it to be supposed that he contemplated in the writing of these poet-

<sup>1</sup> Works (Boston), XIII. 189.

<sup>2</sup> Craik's Hist. of Eng. Lit. I. 378.

ical works merely "some lease of quick revenue," or any immediate advantage to himself, or personal fame, as many of the poets did, in those days. On the contrary, we may safely imagine for him the highest and most disinterested purpose which it is possible to conceive for any author, even for himself, who was seeking by the labors of a life to reform and advance the learning, science, philosophy, arts, morals, and the whole "practic part" of human life in this world; in which the personal interests of the writer, and even the lustre of fame and reputation, were with himself, perhaps, the least important considerations, when these "trifles" were in question.

#### § 2. CIRCUMSTANCES.

Francis Bacon was endowed by nature with the richest gifts and most extraordinary powers. His mother was a learned woman in those days when learning for either sex implied a knowledge of the Greek and Latin classics; and we find her translating works of deep theology, after the example of Lady Jane Grey, who, according to Ascham, read "the Phædon Platonis in Greeke" with as much delight as if it had been "one of the tales of Boccace," or of the Queen herself, who is said to have translated Boethius "*De Consolatione Philosophiæ*" into her own English. This Boethius, it will be remembered, was a Christian philosopher and poet of the fifth century,<sup>1</sup> and a writer that exhibited the highest order of Platonic genius and intellect, both in style and matter surpassing Cicero himself; and in the age of Elizabeth there were not a few scholars and divines, who, like Richard Hooker, George Herbert, John Selden, Dr. Donne, Bishop Andrews, and Lord Bacon himself, were by no means afraid of the philosophy of Plato. His father was not only Lord Keeper of the Seal, but an eminent scholar and a patron of science and art, who had the reputation of uniting in him-

<sup>1</sup> *Opera Boethii* (Class. Delph. Valpy), London, 1823.

self "the opposite characters of a witty and a weighty speaker,"<sup>1</sup> and was, says Sir Robert Naunton, "an unpeecce of wit and of wisdom," and "abundantly facetious which tooke much with the queen."<sup>2</sup> His palace of York House, in which this son was born, and his country-seat of Gorhambury, was well furnished with libraries, and adorned with works of art and whatever might please the taste of the scholar and gentleman. His father breeds him as the King did Leonatus in the play. —

"Puts to him all the learnings that his time  
Could make him receiver of; which he took,  
As we do air, fast as 't was minister'd; and  
In his spring became a harvest; he'd in Court  
(Which rare it is to do) most prais'd, most lov'd;  
A sample to the youngest, to th' most mature,  
A glass that shew'd them; and to the graver,  
A child that guided dotards." — *Cymbeline*, Act I. Sc. 1.

We can easily imagine what must have been the early education of this notable youth, whom the Queen called her young Lord Keeper at ten, and whose "first and childish years," says Dr. Rawley, "were not without some mark of eminency: at which time, he was endow'd with that pregnancy and towardness of wit, as they were passages of that deep and universal apprehension which was manifest in him afterwards." We need not be surprised to find him entering the University of Cambridge, at a little more than twelve, discovering the deficiencies of Aristotle and outstripping his tutors before he was sixteen, going as an *attaché* to the Court of Paris, learning French, Italian, and Spanish, travelling with the French Court, and being intrusted with a mission to the Queen, before he was nineteen; an utter barrister at twenty-one, a member of Parliament at twenty-four, a Benchers at twenty-five, and doubtless a maturer man at twenty, in all learning and wisdom, than most graduates of the universities were at full thirty

<sup>1</sup> *Biogr. Britannica*, I. 446.

<sup>2</sup> *Memoirs of Eliza*, 76, London, 1824.



Upon the death of his father, sitting down thus furnished, at Gray's Inn, in 1579, to the study of the law, a further survey of the Greek and Latin poets, and a thorough study of the philosophic wisdom and culture of the ancients, reviewing the patent deficiencies of his own age in matters civil, moral, and religious, in sciences, philosophy, and art, with the recollection about him, perhaps, of the plays that had been written and performed within the walls of the University while he was there, and with such example before him as that of Sir Philip Sidney, and such encouragement for the cultivation of the art of poetry as was to be found in his writings as being not unworthy of the highest dignity, rank, ambition, or genius of any man, and with that boldness of self-conscious power that did not fear to grapple with Aristotle and Plato, nor even to undertake the renovation of all philosophy, it is not so very wonderful that he should also come to the conclusion that "true art is always capable of advancing,"<sup>1</sup> and should even begin to spread his own wings in the sphere of Apollo. The "Venus and Adonis" at once gets to the very essence and bottom of the pastoral Arcadia, and the "Rape of Lucrece" measures the height of the Roman virtue and dignity. Ancient lore furnishes material and story for a "Titus Andronicus," or a "Pericles," in near imitation of the manner of the Greek tragedy, which he may send to the theatre, perhaps. The "Histoires Tragiques" of Belleforest, and the Italian novels of Cinthio, Bandello, Boccaccio, and the rest, which he has read in Paris, furnish hints of fable and incident for a few delightful and entertaining comedies of love, wit, and humor, which yet savor of the classic lore of the University, and bear traces of his Parisian French and his accomplishments in Italian and Spanish. The splendid entertainments at Court set the young imagination all in a blaze, and produce that extraordinary exhibition of love, wit, and fancy, the "Midsummer Night's Dream," in honor

<sup>1</sup> *Scala Intellectus*, Works (Mont.), XIV. 426-7.

of the maiden Queen. The Christmas Revels at Gray's Inn call for a new "Comedy of Errors" out of Plautus, with sundry sharp hits at the gowned and wigged gentry there assembled, which may go to the theatre also, now that its special work is done. The English Histories of Holinshed, Hall, Stow, Speed, and the rest, all compact with learning, imagination, and poetry, of which he has made some study, as well as Chaucer, the old ballads, and all the old plays, tales, proverbs, and chronicles, which he has found time to ransack, may furnish fable, story, moral precept, and tragic incident enough for a few dramatic histories in the new kind, of which some first specimens and youthful sketches, which will eventually grow into larger dimensions and more perfect form, may be thrown upon the stage at once, until they begin to attract the public attention, and find their way into the hands of the printers, without the author's name, as they were lately acted by the Lord Chamberlain's or the Earl of Pembroke's servants. All this will be done in secret, or with the knowledge of a few friends only who can keep a secret; for he well knows that the public opinion is much against poets and writers for the stage, and that to be known as a poet and a playwright would be next to ruin to all his prospects for advancement in the state, and in a profession in which the greatest lights were of opinion, with Lord Coke, that poets, masters and play-writers were to be ranked with "alchemysts, monopolists, concealers, and informers," whose "fatal end was beggary," being no better than "fit subjects for the grand jury as vagrants." He had not made up his mind yet to become "a sorry book-maker," nor quite to retire to Cambridge with a couple of men, there to devote his life to contemplations and studies, "without looking back." In the mean time, he is pushing his interest at Court, with the tardy support of his uncle, Lord Burghley, and the jealousy of the Cecils; for he has chosen to follow a public, rather than a merely professional or literary career.

Giving an account of himself, in the latter part of his life, more particularly in reference to his philosophical labors, perhaps, but not wholly out of place in this connection, he says : —

“When I came to conceive of myself as born for the service of humanity, and to look upon state employment as amongst those things which are of public right and patent to all, like the wave or the breeze, I proceeded both to inquire what might most conduce to the benefit of men, and to deliberate for what special work I myself had been best fitted by nature. Thereupon I found that no other thing was of so great merit in reference to the human race as the discovery and authorship of new truths and arts, by which human life may be improved. . . . I judged, therefore, that my nature had a certain inherent intimacy and relationship with truth. Yet, seeing that both by descent and education I had been imbued in civil affairs, and, inasmuch as I was still a young man, was sometimes shaken in my opinions, and thinking that I owed something peculiar to my country which was not equally due in all other cases, and hoping that, if I might obtain some honorable rank in the state, I should accomplish what I had designed with greater advantages in the exercise of my genius and my industry, I both applied myself to the acquirement of political knowledge, and, with such modesty as beseemed and in as far as it could be done without any disingenuousness, endeavoured to commend myself to such friends as had it in their power to assist my advancement.”<sup>1</sup>

His compact learning, exact knowledge, and brilliant oratorical powers soon begin to acquire for him an ascendancy in Parliament and public affairs. He connects himself with the fortunes and party of the rising favorite, Essex, and, at the same time, makes the acquaintance of the young lords and courtiers, his adherents and followers, Southampton among them, constant attendants and patrons of the

<sup>1</sup> *Proœmium de Int. Nat.*, (Craik's Bacon, 611).



theatre; who, as the friends and associates of Essex and himself, were no doubt frequent visitors at his chambers in Gray's Inn, or at his lodge at Twickenham. His brother Anthony and himself, the more effectually to push their fortunes in this direction, and to maintain this high estate and prospect of advancement, incur expense beyond their immediate means of living, and even keep a coach, which the good Lady Ann thinks a piece of extravagance; and they give entertainments of stage-plays at Anthony's house to "cits and gentlemen, very much to the delight of Essex and his jovial crew," but, as Lady Ann thinks, also very much "to the peril of her sons' souls."<sup>1</sup> In the summer of 1593, Anthony has become secretary, and Francis, the legal and political adviser of the Earl of Essex; and it is at this very time that the "Venus and Adonis" is dedicated to Southampton, and, in the next year, the "Rape of Lucrece," also, under the name of William Shakespeare. The plays have been performed at his theatre, and he has already acquired the reputation of being the author of them; though as yet none of them have been printed under his name. Certainly it will require no great stretch of imagination to conceive that during these familiar visits of Essex and Southampton to his chambers in Gray's Inn, he may have taken the liberty to show them, or to read to them, the manuscripts of these poems. We may very well suppose they would urge him to publish them. But he does not desire to appear before the public in this character, and means to "profess not to be a poet."<sup>2</sup> This cover is easily suggested. Southampton will not object to the use of his name in a dedication; and William Shakespeare will be as ready to appear as the author of these poems as he has been, or will be, to figure as author on the title-pages of divers and sundry quarto plays which he certainly never wrote. A mere possibility, it is true, or even a strong

<sup>1</sup> Dixon's *Pers. Hist.*, 68.

<sup>2</sup> *Apology concerning Essex.*

probability, cannot be taken as any proof of the fact; but if it be once established by other evidence that the plays and poems were actually written by Francis Bacon, then, of course, some such supposition as this must be admitted as absolutely necessary; and of this fact there will be an ample sufficiency of other evidence. So extraordinary an arrangement, with so eminent a personage as the Earl of Southampton, is indeed a bold hypothesis; especially in the face of that munificent largess of £1000, which he is said to have bestowed on Shakespeare, in recognition of the compliment and of his merit as a poet. But this story is itself a mere tradition, related with distrust by Rowe as handed down by Sir William Davenant; and, as Mr. Halliwell observes, "considering the value of money in those days, such a gift is altogether incredible,"<sup>1</sup> however probable it may be, otherwise, that some notice of the kind may have been taken of him. The Globe Theatre was erected somewhere in these years (1594-5), and it is by no means improbable that the Earl of Southampton should contribute a handsome sum towards this enterprise. And there may have been other reasons, more or less remotely connected with the history of these plays and their author, that were operative with these gay young courtiers in their patronage of the theatre, without the necessity of resorting (with Delia Bacon<sup>2</sup>) to the hypothesis that they had, as a whole, or in any particular, a special bearing upon any schemes then impending for effecting changes in the state and government, or any connection with any club of reformers; especially if we consider that the Queen herself was willing to be wooed and to have sonnets addressed to her; that she took great delight in the masques and plays, triumphs and dumb shows, which they got up for her amusement; and that many of these very plays were performed before her at Court as they came out, and were "well liked of her Majesty."

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Shakes.*, 161.

<sup>2</sup> *Phil. of Shaks. Plays Unfolded*, 1857.

## § 3. THE HISTORICAL PLAYS.

As the work proceeded, the plan would very soon be conceived of a connected and continuous series of historical dramas, which should embrace the entire period of the civil wars of the Roses, rich enough in tragic story and event, and affording ample materials for illustrative examples in the more dignified subjects of a civil and moral nature, beginning with the "King John," as it were by way of prelude, in which the legitimate heir to the throne is set aside, and the nation is plunged into civil war; and continuing in subject and design, though not composed, or produced, in strict chronological order, with the weak and despotic reign of Richard II., whose imbecility leads to another usurpation of the crown, with all the terrible consequences of disastrous civil war; and extending through the two parts of the "Henry IV.," the "Henry V.," and the three parts of the "Henry VI.," to the coming in of Henry the Seventh in the "Richard III.," when the two Roses are finally united in one line, and a tragical history is brought to an end in the more peaceful times which followed: a scheme which may even have been suggested by Sackville's tragedy of "Ferrex and Porrex" and the "Complaint of Buckingham." Speaking of Elizabeth Woodville, Dowager of Edward IV., Bacon says her history "was matter of tragedy,"<sup>1</sup> as it is very effectually made to appear in the "Richard III." The same historical subject was continued, in due time, in a plain prose history of the reign of Henry VII., which contains a graphic and "speaking picture" of the false pretender, Perkin Warbeck, "a counterfeit of that Richard, Duke of York (second son to Edward the Fourth)," of whom there was divulged "a flying opinion" that "he was not murdered in the Tower": wherefore, "this being one of the strangest examples of a personation that ever was in elder or later times," it is also

<sup>1</sup> *Hist. of Henry VII.*



given; and it is written in the true Shakespearean vein, and, as any one may see that looks sharply enough, lacks nothing of the compactness, brevity, clearness, and beauty of his former style, dropping only the high tragic buskin and the blank verse. And here and there, ideas and expressions inevitably crop out in it, all unconsciously to himself, which strike upon the ear of the careful listener like the sound of an echo, as thus:—

“Neither was Perkin for his part wanting to himself either in gracious and princely behaviour, or in ready and apposite answers, or in contenting and caressing those that did apply themselves unto him, or in pretty scorns or disdain to those that seemed to doubt of him; but in all things did notably acquit himself: insomuch as it was generally believed (as well amongst great persons as amongst the vulgar) that he was indeed Duke Richard. Nay, himself with long and continual counterfeiting and with often telling a lie, was turned (by habit) almost unto the thing he seemed to be, and from a liar to a believer.”<sup>1</sup>

And we have the same ideas and similar expressions, in a like connection, in the “*Tempest*,” as follows:—

“*Pros.* I thus neglecting worldly ends, all dedicate  
To closeness, and the bettering of my mind  
With that, which but by being so retir’d  
O’er-priz’d all popular rate, in my false brother  
Awak’d an evil nature; and my trust,  
Like a good parent, did beget of him  
A falsehood, in its contrary as great  
As my trust was; which had, indeed, no limit,  
A confidence sans bound. He, being thus lorded,  
Not only with what my revenue yielded,  
But what my power might else exact, — like one,  
Who having, unto truth, by telling of it,<sup>2</sup>  
Made such a sinner of his memory,

<sup>1</sup> *Hist. of Hen. VII.; Works* (Boston), XI. 210.

<sup>2</sup> So in the Folio, and in all editions I have seen; but I believe these words are an error of the press. It should read *oft*: the metre requires it, the sense requires it; and this authority from Bacon may be said to demand it.

To credit his own lie — he did believe  
 He was indeed the Duke; out o' th' substitution,  
 And executing th' outward face of royalty,  
 With all prerogative: — hence his ambition  
 Growing, — Dost thou hear?

*Miran.* Your tale, sir, would cure deafness.

*Pros.* To have no screen between this part he play'd,  
 And him he play'd it for, he needs will be  
 Absolute Milan." — *Act I. Sc. 2.*

The similarity of the thought, in this often telling a lie, is noticed by Mr. Spedding,<sup>1</sup> who remarks that the suggestion came from Speed. Shakespeare, it is true, as well as Bacon, may have gotten the idea from that author; but the general tenor of both passages, and the peculiar expression *he did believe he was indeed the Duke*, which accompanies the idea, sounds wonderfully as if it had dropped from the same mint, in both cases. Even this might be considered accidental, if it stood alone; but it is only one of a thousand instances of equal, or greater force, that everywhere pervade these writings. Nor is it at all probable that Bacon would catch both the idea and expression from Shakespeare's play: in fact, it is far more probable that both came from Bacon; for we learn from Mr. Spedding's preface, that Bacon had formed the design of writing that history, and had actually begun it, and sketched the character of Henry VII., before the death of Elizabeth, having doubtless collected materials for the purpose, and made a study of the subject and of the story of Perkin, at the time when he was studying the historical pictures for these same dramatic histories. This conjecture is confirmed by the circumstance that Prospero's "false brother," the pretender in the play,

—"confederates

(So dry he was for sway) with the King of Naples."

And the story itself seems well-nigh to have been suggested by the account, which is given in the "History of Henry VII.," of the French embassy, one topic of which

<sup>1</sup> *Notes to the Hist. of Hen. VII.*

was, that the French King intended "to make war upon the kingdom of Naples, being now in the possession of a *bastard slip of Aragon* ; but appertaining unto his majesty by clear and undoubted right ; which, if he should not by just arms seek to recover, he would neither acquit his honour nor answer it to his people ;" and so, he had resolved to make "the reconquest of Naples."<sup>1</sup> Mention is made also of "Alphonso, Duke of Calabria, eldest son to Ferdinando, King of Naples" ; and among the characters in the play are "Alonso, King of Naples ; Prospero, the rightful Duke of Milan ; Antonio, his brother, the usurping Duke," and "Ferdinand, son to the King of Naples" : —

"Pros. This King of Naples, being an enemy  
To me inveterate, hearkens my brother's suit ;  
Which was, that he, in lieu o' the premises,  
Of homage, and I know not how much tribute,  
Should presently extirpate me and mine  
Out of the dukedom." — *Act I. Sc. 2.*

And so, the story in the play itself having been drawn from the same quarry of materials as the history, this idea, having been once written into the play, in 1611, (if not already written into his notes for the History before 1603), very naturally drops out again in the completed work of 1621 ; and that, too, at about the same time when we may suppose he was engaged in revising the plays themselves for the Folio of 1623.

And further still, these same Italian and Spanish histories, in the very next year (1612), are introduced into Bacon's speech in the Countess of Shrewsbury's case, in immediate connection with Henry VII. and Perkin Warbeck ; and in such manner as to show that they were still fresh in his memory ; and, in the facts stated as well as in the style and manner of the narration, the critical reader will discover some very suggestive resemblances with a part of the story of the "Tempest." The Countess had refused

<sup>1</sup> *Hist of Hen. VII. ; Works* (Boston), XI. 162, 199.



to answer in the matter of *Arabella Stuart*, who had married *Seymour*, without the King's consent, and shed the kingdom. Bacon's speech proceeds thus:—

"And accordingly hath been the practice of the wisest and stoutest princes to hold for rather pregnant of evil, to have any near them in blood to fly into foreign parts. Wherein I will not wander; but take example of King Henry the Seventh, a prince not unfit to be paralleled with his Majesty. I mean not the particular of *Perkin Warbeck*, for he was but an idol or a disguise; but the example I mean is that of the end of *Suffolk*, whom the king extorted from Philip of Austria. The story is memorable, that Philip, after the death of *Isabella*, coming to take possession of his kingdom of Castile, which was but matrimonial to his father-in-law *Ferdinando of Aragon*, was cast by weather upon the coast of *Weymouth*, where the Italian story saith, King Henry used him in all things else as a prince, but in one thing as a prisoner; for he forced upon him to promise to restore the end of *Suffolk* that was fled into *Flanders*."<sup>1</sup>

Now, as King Henry VII. was deemed a prince "not unfit to be paralleled with his Majesty," so *Prospero* in the play was "the prime Duke," and

— "as reported  
In dignity and, for the liberal arts,  
Without a parallel." — *Act I. Sc. 2.*

And as Philip, coming to his kingdom of Castile, "which was but matrimonial to his father-in-law *Ferdinando*," was "cast by weather upon the coast of *Weymouth*," so the King of Naples, sailing with Prince *Ferdinand*, his son, for *Tunis*, where his daughter *Claribel* was to find a husband, was cast away in a storm upon the coast of the imaginary Atlantic island; and the fortunes of Prince *Ferdinand*, as well as the principal events and the leading interest of the story in the play, are made to turn upon matters matri-

<sup>1</sup> 2 Howell's State Trials, 775

monial to his intended father-in-law, the rightful Duke of Milan. Prospero regains his dukedom; Ferdinand, like Philip, is restored to his kingdom of Naples, with Miranda for a wife, in due time "to be King and Queen there"; and the King of Naples becomes the friend of the restored Duke of Milan; and, in order to accomplish the object, as King Henry VII. used Philip in the speech, so Ferdinand in the play is "used in all things else as a prince, but in one thing as a prisoner." In the shipwreck, Ferdinand is separated from the rest of the ship's company, and cast upon the shore alone; the invisible spirit Ariel is specially sent to draw him on by means of charms and music towards Prospero's cell; on the way, he falls in with Miranda, much to the surprise and admiration of both; and, as the intent was, they forthwith fall in love. Prospero, seeing that his charm is working more than fast enough, suddenly puts on an air of severity towards Ferdinand:—

"*Pros. [Aside.]* They are both in either's pow'rs; but  
this swift business  
I must uneasy make, lest too light winning  
Make the prize light."

He denounces Ferdinand as a usurper and a spy, that has come upon the island to win it from him "the lord on 't." Ferdinand, after some show of resistance, befitting his princely quality, submits himself a prisoner, thus:—

"*Pros. [To Ferd.]* Come on; obey:  
Thy nerves are in their infancy again,  
And have no vigor in them.  
*Ferd.* So they are:  
My spirits, as in a dream, are all bound up.  
My father's loss, the weakness which I feel,  
The wreck of all my friends, and this man's threats,  
To whom I am subdu'd, are but light to me,  
Might I but through my prison once a day  
Behold this maid. All corners else o' th' earth  
Let liberty make use of: space enough  
Have I in such a prison.

*Pros. [Aside.]* It works." — *Act I. Sc. 2.*

There is no other prison, however, than the manner in

which he is used; there is some temporary restraint for a purpose which is accomplished, the marriage and a restoration of friendship with Naples; and so he is treated in one thing as a prisoner, but in all things else as a prince. He is even set to the drudgery of piling logs, in order to bring his sincerity to the final test. This apparent harshness awakens the sympathy of Miranda, and she offers to help him:—

"*Ferd.* I am in my condition  
A prince, Miranda; . . . .  
. . . . . and for your sake,  
Am I this patient logman."—*Act III. Sc. 1.*

The same story is told more at length in the "History of Henry VII.,"<sup>1</sup> in which King Philip is "surprised with a cruel tempest," and "the ship wherein the King and Queen were, with two other small barks only, torn and in great peril, to escape the fury of the weather, *thrust* into Weymouth. King Philip himself, having not been used as it seems to sea, all wearied and extreme sick, would needs *land to refresh his spirits.*" And when King Henry asks for the return of "that same hare-brain wild fellow," his subject the earl of Suffolk, the King of Castile replies, *That can I not do with my honour, and less with yours; for you will be thought to have used me as a prisoner.*" The same style runs from his pen, whether in prose or verse:—

"*Gon.* Was Milan *thrust* from Milan, that his issue  
Should become kings of Naples? . . . .

*Pros.* ——— but, howsoe'er you have  
Been justled from your senses, know for certain,  
That I am Prospero, and that very duke  
Which was *thrust* forth of Milan; who most strangely  
Upon this shore, where you were wrack'd, *was landed*,  
To be the lord on't."—*Act V. Sc. 1.*

And the tale there ends with the same dream in which Ferdinand's *spirits* (in the play) were all bound up, thus:—  
—"So that as the felicity of Charles the Eighth was said

<sup>1</sup> *Works* (Boston), XI. 342-348.



to be a dream, so the adversity of Ferdinando was said likewise to be a dream, it passed over so soon."

The earliest authentic notice that we have of the existence of this play is the entry discovered by Cunningham in the accounts of the Revels at Court, in the Book for 1611-12, in which it is named as having been performed before his Majesty at Whitehall, on "Hallowmas night," which, falling on the first day of November, is presumed to have been November 1, 1611.<sup>1</sup> It was also acted at Court, during the festivities attending the nuptials of the Princess Elizabeth in the beginning of the year 1613. The best critics have assigned the composition of the play to the year 1611. Some incidents in it make it quite certain that it must have been written after the voyage of the "Admiral," and after the publication of Jourdan's account of it, in his "Discovery of the Barmudas, otherwise called the Ile of Divels," in 1610; which islands are therein "supposed to be enchanted and inhabited with witches and devils, which grew by reason of accustomed monstrous thunderstorm and tempest near unto those islands"; and the ship, "by God's divine providence, at a high water ran right between two strong rocks, where it stuck fast, without breaking," and all were saved. So, in the play, when Prospero is giving an account to Miranda how they were sent to sea in "a rotten carcass of a boat," to which "the sighing winds did but loving wrong," until there in that island they arrived, we have a similar expression, thus:—

*"Miran.*                      How came we ashore?  
*Pros.* By Providence divine."

The Countess of Shrewsbury's case was heard at Trinity term (that is, in the beginning of summer) of 1612;<sup>2</sup> and taking the play to have been first produced in the preceding November, there would seem to be no occasion for

<sup>1</sup> White's *Shakes.*, II. p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> 7 Coke's Rep. 94.

wonder that, at the date of this trial, these same Italian stories which had so lately served the purpose of the poet, should have been still floating in the imagination of the orator; nor that they should have been thus reproduced in historic accuracy, not without some poetic effect, to illustrate the legal argument.

Critical editors have been perplexed to find the sources of the story of the "Tempest." Mr. White thinks the characters point to some old Italian or Spanish tale as its foundation; Collins believed it was founded upon "a romance called 'Aurelio and Isabella,' printed in Italian, Spanish, French, and English, in 1588," which neither he nor any one else, it seems, has ever been able to find again; others have traced its origin to Somers' "Voyage" and Jourdan's "Discovery"; and probably the truth is, that suggestions were derived from a variety of sources, these included, and that the borrowed materials, mingled with the new creations, in passing through the limbec of his powerful brain, were distilled into an imaginary essence, altogether new and different as a whole, but still recognizable as the same in some parts and phases, which exhibit striking ideal resemblances, close analogies, and even very palpable identities of thought, style, and diction. And here we may venture to make an application of the words of King Alonso in the play:—

"Alon. This is as strange a maze as e'er men trod;  
And there is in this business more than Nature  
Was ever conduct of. Some oracle  
Must rectify our knowledge."

This is not all. There are more instances of like kind in this same History, of which one or two may be cited. In the "Measure for Measure," written about the year 1603, we find this rather singular expression:—

"For such a warped slip of wilderness  
Ne'er issued from his blood."—*Act III. Sc. 1.*

And in the "History of Henry VII." Perkin Warbeck is

made to say, "And from that hand to the wide wilderness (as I may truly call it) for so the world hath been to me;"<sup>1</sup> and again, King Henry says, "France is no wilderness."<sup>2</sup> And then we have this: "The King our master hath a purpose and determination to make war upon the kingdom of Naples, being now in the possession of a bastard slip of Aragon;"<sup>3</sup> which may remind us again of "the blind rascally boy" Cupid, in the "As You Like It,"<sup>4</sup> "that same wicked bastard of Venus, that was begot of thought, conceived of spleen, and born of madness." In like manner, we find in the Essays the following: "True friends; without which the world is but a wilderness,"<sup>5</sup> and in the New Atlantis, "the greatest wilderness of waters in the world;"<sup>6</sup> and in a speech, "you take pleasure in a wilderness of variety."<sup>7</sup> And again, we have it in the plays, thus: "Environed with a wilderness of sea;"<sup>8</sup> and again, "Rome is but a wilderness of tigers;"<sup>9</sup> and still again, "I would not have given it for a wilderness of monkeys."<sup>10</sup> Can all this be accidental?

Still further, we have in the "Hamlet" these lines:—

"Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear by this sword.

*Ham.* Well said, old mole! canst work i' th' ground so fast?

A worthy pioneer! once more remove":—*Act I. Sc. 5.*

which crops out again in the "Henry VII." thus:—

"He had such moles perpetually working and casting to undermine him."<sup>11</sup>

And it appears again in a masque which he wrote for Essex, thus:—

"They [lovers] are charged with descending too low: it is as the poor mole, which seeing not the clearness of the air, diveth into the darkness of the earth"<sup>12</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Hist. Henry VII.; Works* (Boston), XI. 246.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 181.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 162.

<sup>4</sup> *Act IV. Sc. 1.*

<sup>5</sup> *Works* (Boston), XII. 166.

<sup>6</sup> *Works* (Philad.), II. 323.

<sup>7</sup> *Works* (Mont.), XIII. 121.

<sup>8</sup> *Titus Andr., Act III. Sc. 1.*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid., Act III. Sc. 1.*

<sup>10</sup> *Merch. of Venice, Act III. Sc. 1.*

<sup>11</sup> *Works* (Boston), XI. 360.

<sup>12</sup> Spedding's *Letters and Life*, I. 389.



And again he says, —

—“and become some sorry book-maker, or a true pioneer in that mine of truth, which, he said, lay so deep.”<sup>1</sup>

And again, in this History, speaking of the conditional treason of Sir William Stanley, who had said of Perkin Warbeck, “*That if he were sure that that young man were King Edward's son, he would never bear arms against him,*” Bacon continues thus : —

“But for the conditional, it seemeth the judges of that time (who were learned men, and the three chief of them of the privy counsel,) thought it was a dangerous thing to admit Ifs and Ands to qualify words of treason; whereby every man might express his malice, and blanch his danger.”<sup>2</sup>

So in Richard's council on the Coronation, we have an illustration of this same kind of treason, in these lines : —

“*Hast.* If they have done this deed, my noble lord, —

“*Glos.* If, thou protector of this damned strumpet,

Talk'st thou to me of ‘ifs’? — Thou art a traitor : —

Off with his head !” — *Richard III., Act III. Sc. 4.*

But to make a special compliment to the throne and line of Henry VII., and to his present Majesty, King James, in particular, a last grand effort is made, just when it will at least express his gratitude for the royal promise to succeed to the Attorney-General's place, and, at the same time, grace the nuptials of the Palatine branch in the Princess Elizabeth; and the “Henry VIII.” deliberately honors and magnifies the King himself, by carefully weaving into the scenes the surpassing excellence and beauty of Anne Bullen (of whom there is nothing in Holinshed, from whom the rest of the story is almost literally taken), closing with the unrivalled virtues, fortune, and honor of her descendant, the virgin queen : —

“Nor shall this peace sleep with her: but as when

The bird of wonder dies, the maiden phoenix,

Her ashes new create another heir,

As great in admiration as herself,

<sup>1</sup> *Letter.*

<sup>2</sup> *Works (Boston), XI. 228.*

So shall she leave her blessedness to one  
 (When heaven shall call her from this cloud of darkness)  
 Who from the sacred ashes of her honour  
 Shall star-like rise, as great in fame as she was,  
 And so stand fix'd. Peace, plenty, love, truth, terror,  
 That were the servants of this chosen infant,  
 Shall then be his, and like a vine grow to him:  
 Wherever the bright sun of heaven shall shine,  
 His honour and the greatness of his name  
 Shall be, and make new nations: he shall flourish,  
 And, like a mountain cedar, reach his branches  
 To all the plains about him." — *Act V. Sc. 4.*

This is doubtless the same star and vine that are spoken of in the letter to his Majesty, thanking him for "his gracious acceptance" of his book (the "*Novum Organum*"), in which he says:—

"I see your majesty is a star that hath benevolent aspect and gracious influence upon all things that tend to a general good.

" 'Daphni, quid antiquos signorum suspicis artus?  
 Ecce Dionæi processit Cæsaris astrum;  
 Astrum, quo segetes gauderent frugibus, et quo  
 Duceret apricus in collibus uva colorem.'

[*VIRG., Eclog. ix. 46-9.*]

"This work, which is for the bettering of men's bread and wine, which are the characters of temporal blessings and sacraments of eternal, I hope, by God's holy providence, will be ripened by Cæsar's Star."<sup>1</sup>

And it appears again, thus:—

"Henry the Fifth! thy ghost I invoke;  
 Prosper this realm, keep it from civil broils!  
 Combat with adverse planets in the heavens!  
 A far more glorious star thy soul will make  
 Than Julius Cæsar." — *1 Henry VI., Act I. Sc. 1.*

Prospero, in the "*Tempest*," also had his star:—

"*Pros.* —and by my prescience  
 I find my zenith doth depend upon  
 A most auspicious star, whose influence  
 If now I court not, but omit, my fortunes  
 Will ever after droop." — *Act I. Sc. 2.*

That Bacon had the subject of the History of England much in mind, having long contemplated undertaking to

<sup>1</sup> Letter, 19 Oct. 1620; *Works* (Mont.), XII. 395.

write it anew, we learn from his letter to the Lord Chancellor, written soon after the accession of King James, in which the following passage may be particularly cited here:—

“The act I speak of is the order given by his majesty for the erection of a tomb or monument for our late sovereign Queen Elizabeth; wherein I may note much, but this at this time, that as her majesty did always right to his majesty’s hopes, so his highness doth, in all things, right to her memory; a very just and princely retribution. But from this occasion by a very easy ascent, I passed further, being put in mind, by this representative of her person, of the more true and more perfect representative which is of her life and government. For as statues and pictures are dumb histories, so histories are speaking pictures; wherein (if my affection be not too great, or my reading too small), I am of this opinion, that if Plutarch were alive to write lives by parallels, it would trouble him, for virtue and fortune both, to find for her a parallel amongst women. And though she was of the passive sex, yet her government was so active, as, in my simple opinion, it made more impression upon the several states of Europe than it received from thence.”<sup>1</sup>

All this, it is easy to see, not only harmonizes well with the view here taken of these dramatic histories or “speaking pictures,” but rings peculiarly like the sonorous tribute to Queen Elizabeth in the “Henry VIII.,” which reads thus:—

“*Cran.*                      Let me speak, sir,  
For Heaven now bids me; and the words I utter  
Let none think flattery, for they’ll find ‘em truth.  
This royal infant, — Heaven still move about her! —  
Though in her cradle, yet now promises  
Upon this land a thousand thousand blessings,  
Which time shall bring to ripeness. She shall be  
(But few now living can behold that goodness)  
A pattern to all princes living with her,  
And all that shall succeed: Saba was never

<sup>1</sup> Letter, *Works* (Mont.), XII. 69.



More covetous of wisdom and fair virtue  
 Than this pure soul shall be: all princely graces,  
 That mould up such a mighty piece as this is,  
 With all the virtues that attend the good,  
 Shall still be doubled on her: truth shall nurse her,  
 Holy and heavenly thoughts still counsel her:  
 She shall be lov'd and fear'd: her own shall bless her:  
 Her foes shake like a field of beaten corn,  
 And hang their heads with sorrow: good grows with her.  
 In her days every man shall eat in safety  
 Under his own vine what he plants; and sing  
 The merry songs of peace to all his neighbours.  
 God shall be truly known; and those about her  
 From her shall read the perfect ways of honour,  
 And by those claim their greatness, not by blood."

*Act V. Sc. 4.*

And so King James is ingeniously represented, and with a certain degree of poetic truthfulness, as inheriting all this honor and virtue and greatness even from Henry VII., and from Anne Bullen, not by direct descent of blood, indeed, but through the ashes of this wonderful phoenix, as of that "more true and more perfect representative which is of her life and government."

At the same time, this illustrative example in a most dignified subject rounds out the historical series of those "actual types and models" which were "to place, as it were, before our eyes the whole process of the mind, and the continuous frame and order of discovery in particular subjects selected for their variety and importance"<sup>1</sup> (as I will endeavor to make appear); and this one should be

"Sad, high, and working, full of state and woe."

And having thus had occasion to make a study of this period of history, which he finds to be "wonderful, indeed, from the Union of the Roses to the Union of the Kingdoms,"<sup>2</sup> the preceding period having already been treated of, poetically, in the "speaking pictures," and so far as lay "the potential mood"; and having the materials at hand to work, as the first honors which he undertakes to do

*Introd. to Nov. Org.*

<sup>2</sup> *De Aug. Scient., Lib. II. c. 7.*

his country and his king by his pen and the help of those "other arts which may give form to matter," he not only takes up again his former sketch of the "History of Henry VII.," laid aside since before 1603, and perfects and completes it into a tribute worthy to be submitted to "the file of his Majesty's judgment," and dedicated to Prince Charles as the first fruit of his banishment, which he accomplishes in one summer, but also, the "History of Henry VIII.," in whose reign began that great change in the Church, which was "such as had hitherto rarely been brought upon the stage,"<sup>1</sup> long since contemplated, of which a beginning, likewise, has already been made that is "like a fable of the poets"; but deserves "all in a piece a worthy narration," and, time and health permitting, it is to be likewise dedicated to Prince Charles. But time fails him, and it is never done.

#### § 4. THE GREATER PLAYS.

Furthermore, it is to be observed, that the more philosophical and greater plays were written after 1600, when Bacon was more than forty years of age and in the maturity of his powers (as indeed William Shakespeare also must have been); when his philosophical and critical studies had become still more universal, exact, and profound; when his conceptions of nature and the constitution of the universe, his theories of practical sciences, civil institutions, and moral relations, his views of society and humanity, his experience in human affairs and his observation of human life and character in all ranks, phases, conditions, and degrees, had become more ample and perfect; when his new rhetoric, his critical survey of all the arts of delivery, and his study of the nature of "true art," and of the uses and proper function of true poetry, had been matured, and his whole culture had become more elaborate, deep, and complete; — a kind of culture which it is difficult to imagine

<sup>1</sup> *De Aug. Scient.*, Lib. II. c. 7.

how William Shakespeare, under the conditions of life which environed him, could by any possibility have attained to. It is to be noted, also, that the first sketches of the three parts of the "Henry VI." (and perhaps, also, of the "King John"), the earliest plays of the historical series, written, it may be, before the entire plan was fully conceived, and before the first play in the historical order of the wars of the Roses, the "Richard II.," was produced, were taken up again, afterwards, and rewritten, greatly elaborated, and reproduced, in conformity with the rest of the series; and, of the first part of the "Henry VI.," which exhibits greater care and maturity of judgment in the execution than the other parts, which, nevertheless, contain passages that may stand before the throne of the tragic muse beside the Greek tragedy itself without blushing, done in the finest lyric style of the ancients, and plainly intended to be, to some extent at least, in imitation of the classic model, we hear nothing, until it appears for the first time in the Folio of 1623, beyond the bare fact that such a play existed, in some form, with the other parts, at an early date. The "Romeo and Juliet," produced in 1595, though conceived on profoundly philosophical principles, bearing strong traces of the "Fable of Cupid" and the "Nemesis" of Francis Bacon (as will be shown), does not exhibit the same degree of matured strength and finish as the later productions, though one of the most attractive of the plays upon the stage. The "Midsummer Night's Dream," undoubtedly written about the year 1594, though there appears to be no certain mention of it before 1598, having been first printed in 1600, is a wonderful creation, indeed, and entirely fit to be performed, as it was, before the Queen's Majesty at Whitehall; but the writer had not yet wholly freed himself from the shackles of rhyme, nor from the glowing fancy and "strong imagination" of

"The lunatic, the lover, and the poet,"



nor from the philosophy of Cupid and the allurements of the Court, as is evident in these lines :—

"*Ober.* That very time I saw (but thou could'st not),  
Flying between the cold moon and the Earth,  
Cupid all arm'd: a certain aim he took  
At a fair vestal, throned by the West,  
And loos'd his love-shaft smartly from his bow,  
As it should pierce a hundred thousand hearts:  
But I might see young Cupid's fiery shaft  
Quench'd in the chaste beams of the wat'ry moon,  
And the imperial vot'ress passed on,  
In maiden meditation, fancy-free." — *Act II. Sc. 1.*

Between 1594 and 1600, the "Romeo and Juliet," the "As You Like It," the "Richard III.," the "Merchant of Venice," and the two parts of the "Henry IV.," may take rank, in many respects, with the greater plays; but after 1600, come the "Twelfth Night," the "Othello," the "Hamlet," the "Measure for Measure," the "Lear," the "Macbeth," the "Julius Cæsar," the "Antony and Cleopatra," the "Troilus and Cressida," the "Coriolanus," the "Cymbeline," the "Winter's Tale," the "Tempest," the "Henry VIII.," and the "Timon," splendid dramas all, the most masterly productions of their author, and, beyond all question, the work of a profound thinker, a critical philosopher, a practised writer, a learned scholar, and a polished culture, as well as of that artistic genius and high order of intellectual endowment, which nature might give to any man. Twelve of these fifteen plays were published, for the first time, in the Folio of 1623: of some four or five of them it is not positively known that they had been performed at all on the stage; and nearly all of them were of such a kind and character as to attract less the attention of the theatre and the public, though really among the greatest of the author's works; and they were not printed. Some other of the more philosophical plays, as the "Romeo and Juliet," the "Midsummer Night's Dream," the "Hamlet," the "Lear," and the "Measure for Measure," had more

attractive qualities for the public eye and ear, perhaps, and they kept the stage and were printed. The "*Troilus and Cressida*," which was altogether too philosophically profound and stately, too learnedly abstruse and lofty, to be popular on the stage, was even printed first, and only went to the theatre afterwards, where its stay seems to have been short.

Of the ten earlier plays which were first printed in the Folio, or first in complete form, some, it seems, had seldom appeared upon the stage, and others had been printed, at an early date, as first draughts, or as stolen copies. Of those which had been printed before 1623, there were, among the more attractive and popular plays on the stage, the "*Richard II.*," the "*Richard III.*," the "*Merchant of Venice*," the two parts of the "*Henry IV.*," the "*Henry V.*," the "*Love's Labor's Lost*," and the "*Much Ado About Nothing*," and of these, printed editions had been more in demand. But this part of the subject is so dark, that it is difficult to arrive at any certain conclusion, or any clear notion, in what manner these plays came to be printed at all. Doubtless there were some stolen copies and surreptitious editions, especially before 1600. The "*Titus Andronicus*" was entered as early as 1594, but it is not known to have been printed before 1600. The first sketch of the second part of the "*Henry VI.*," printed in 1594 under the title of "*The First Part of the Contention of the Two Famous Houses of York and Lancaster*," and that of the third part, printed in 1595 under the style of "*The True Tragedy of Richard, Duke of York*," both without the name of the author, were very probably surreptitious copies of the early plays, which appear to have been upon the stage as early, at least, as 1587-88. The "*Merry Wives of Windsor*," first printed in 1602, was so imperfect, even as a first sketch of the play, that it has been presumed by the critics to have been a stolen and mangled copy, as the "*Hamlet*" of 1603 most certainly was. So far as we have any posi-

dive knowledge, the second edition of the "Richard II.," which was printed in 1598, with the scene of deposing King Richard left out, was the first one that bore the name of William Shakespeare on the title-page; and there may have been some special reasons, as well for the publication of it at that time as for a close concealment of the real author's name (as we shall see below); especially when it is considered that, only one year later, Dr. Hayward was actually sent to the Tower for publishing the "First Yeare of King Henry the Fourth," which contained little else than the deposing of Richard II., which the Queen took to be a seditious and treasonable pamphlet; and that the Earl of Essex was charged with "undutiful carriage" toward her Majesty, in that he allowed it to be dedicated to him; though, on being warned of her anger, he had made all haste to have the book called in and suppressed.

On the other hand, some of the previous quartos approach so nearly to the more perfect copies of the Folio, and are so correctly printed, that it would seem to be highly probable that the author himself had had some hand in the supervision of the press. And when it is considered how many of those that had been printed in quarto were remodelled, rewritten, enlarged, elaborated, corrected, or amended, before they appeared again in the Folio, and how many of the plays were published therein for the first time, and of what kind they were, we may easily believe, not only that the editors had much benefit from the possession of the "true original copies," but that even the true original copies themselves had undergone much revision and emendation, before they appeared for the last time in the finished and perfected form of the Folio of 1623; nor need we be surprised at the announcement of the Preface, that they had so published them "as where (before) you were abused with divers stolne and surreptitious copies, maimed and deformed by the frauds and stealthes of injurious imposters, that exposed them: even those are now offered to



your view cured, and perfect of their limbs; and all the rest, absolute in their numbers as he conceived them": *omnibus numeris suis absolutam!*

And that such was the fact, the history of the "Timon of Athens" may furnish at least some slight confirmation. It has been observed that the old play of "Timon" was the work of some other author altogether; and the studies of the later critics, especially Mr. Knight, have shown that the materials and the story of this play must have been drawn from other sources than that old play, or North's translation of Plutarch; and, in fact, that they came chiefly from the untranslated Greek of Lucian. There appears to be no mention on record of any performance of this play on the stage in those times, nor does the existence of it appear to have been known, until it was published in this Folio; and (as it will be shown) there is so much in the matter and style of it that so aptly accords with the external history of Lord Bacon's life, and especially with his later years, and so many distinct traces of himself in it, that it is not difficult to believe it was the latest production of his dramatic muse.

#### § 5. ASSOCIATES.

That Francis Bacon, during the earlier portion of the period in which these plays were produced, comprising also nearly the whole period of the sonnets and minor poems, was an intimate personal friend, acquaintance, and associate of the Earls of Essex, Southampton, Rutland, Pembroke, and Montgomery, and other young lords and courtiers, who were also, at the same time, the especial patrons and constant frequenters of Shakespeare's theatre, may be taken as an indubitable fact. Not only in the relations of these great personages, but in the manners of the court and time, there are many circumstances which tend strongly to confirm the view here taken of this authorship. A few of them may be particularly noticed, even at the risk of some

slight repetition. It was in 1609 that the first authentic edition of the sonnets was dedicated by the printer to "Mr. W. H.," the only begetter of them, (supposed by Mr. Collier and others, no doubt correctly, to mean William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke,) as "never before imprinted";<sup>1</sup> the previous smaller edition having been in all probability surreptitiously published. Now it is worthy of mention, at least, that Pembroke, Rutland, and Montgomery, were witnesses to Bacon's patent of peerage in 1618, and were present at his investiture with the coronet of St. Alban in 1621; and to Pembroke and Montgomery was dedicated the Folio of 1623. It is historically known that Bacon wrote sonnets to the Queen, and masques and devices to be exhibited before her. Plays, masques, and triumphs were frequently gotten up, sometimes in great magnificence, by these young lords and courtiers, for her entertainment at Court, at the Universities, at the Inns of Court, or at their own private houses, in which her greatest favorites took the leading interest and the largest part. Companies of players were kept enrolled among the servants of the greater nobles, or were licensed under their patronage. Shakespeare's theatres received the royal countenance and protection. The "Lord Chamberlain's Servants" of the Globe and Blackfriars, in the reign of Elizabeth, became "His Majesty's Servants," in the time of King James. Nor is there anything improbable in the supposition that the courtly Francis Bacon, who was so notoriously given to the writing of masques and sonnets for the edification of the virgin Queen, should exert his genius in this same direction far more extensively than was publicly known, or even suspected by the Queen herself. It is quite certain that some of the plays were performed, for the first time, before her Majesty at Whitehall and other palaces; and, according to certain traditions, she seems to have taken an

<sup>1</sup> *Shakes. Sonnets* (Fac-simile of the ed. of 1609, from the Original in the Library of Bridgewater House), London, 1862.

especial delight in the fantastic wit and superb drolleries of the fat knight in the "Henry IV." and the "Merry Wives of Windsor." King James appears to have taken equal pleasure in these dramatic entertainments. As we have seen, many of the plays were first performed before the King at Court, in his time. And the "Essay on Masques and Triumphs," and the several masques themselves, which are certainly known to have been written by Bacon, afford proof enough that he had the ability, the Shakespearean wit, the same grace, brevity, and beauty of style, an imagination equally powerful, and a love for the sport.

King James, on his coming into England in 1603, was entertained with a play performed by Heming's company, at Wilton, the country-seat of the Earl of Pembroke. The "Macbeth" was evidently suggested by the change of dynasty and the Scottish superstitions concerning demonology and witchcraft, on which King James had himself written a book; and the new sovereign is said to have acknowledged the compliment in an autograph letter addressed to William Shakespeare, a document which seems never to have seen the light. "The system of Dæmonologie," says Dr. Johnson's Preface, "was immediately adopted by all who desired either to gain preferment, or not to lose it." And it is worthy of notice, also, in this connection, that this play was written about the time that Bacon was made Solicitor-General; and that the "Henry VIII." was produced in great splendor, with a studied compliment to King James, just when he had obtained the royal promise to succeed to the Attorney-General's place. Not that King James, or Queen Elizabeth, knew that Bacon was the author of these plays (though it might be difficult to name a reason why they should not have known), but that they may very well have understood, at least, that he, among other courtiers, was largely instrumental in getting up these magnificent entertainments for the royal amuse-



ment. Both of them certainly knew that Bacon "had a great wit and much learning," and that he took a leading part in the actual composition of some of them.

No more is it to be doubted, that the intimate personal relations which subsisted between Bacon and Essex extended to Southampton as well. He was of Essex's party, and was his supporter in those wayward schemes which culminated in a treasonable attempt against the Queen's government; and he was a party accused in the prosecutions and trials which followed. Essex was beheaded; Southampton, only imprisoned in the Tower; but soon after the accession of James, he was set at liberty. While yet in the Tower, Bacon addressed him the following letter:—

"It may please your Lordship,—I would have been very glad to have presented my humble service to your Lordship by my attendance, if I could have foreseen that it should not have been displeasing to you. And therefore, because I would commit no error, I chose to write; assuring your Lordship how credible soever it may seem to you at first, yet it is as true as a thing that God knoweth; that this great change hath wrought in me no other change towards your Lordship than this; that I may safely be now that which I was truly before. And so craving no other pardon, than for troubling you with my letter, I do not now begin to be, but continue to be,

"Your Lordship's humble and much devoted."<sup>1</sup>

On the accession of King James, the friends and followers of Essex were taken into especial favor, while those who had been the favorites of Elizabeth were, for a time, held at a distance, Bacon among the rest, though very soon afterwards formally appointed to the place of King's Counsel, the first that had ever been, "under the degree of serjeant, made so *honoris causâ*," says Blackstone.<sup>2</sup> When the trials of Essex and Southampton for high treason came on, in the previous reign, Bacon, as one of the Queen's Coun-

<sup>1</sup> *Works* (Mont.), XII. 115.

<sup>2</sup> 3 Black. Comm., 27.

sel, was constrained to take a part in them, much against his will, and by the express command of the Queen, "*no-lens volens*," his request to be excused being peremptorily refused, and for very curious reasons, as we shall see ; and, during her reign, it would have been neither judicious, nor advantageous, for either party, that Bacon should have interposed in their behalf, beyond what he actually did ; and this they both well knew. It is no matter of wonder, that in such times and under such circumstances, private friendships should be compelled to go somewhat under cover, or even be converted into temporary dislike, by the course of political events. But now that things were changed, and his offers of service might be of some value, and without danger to either of them, Bacon does not hesitate to come forward, though with some delicate saving of the possibility that the feelings of his old friend towards him may have become estranged under the trying events which had taken place, with this assurance of his continuing personal regard ; notwithstanding that he had been compelled by considerations of honor and duty of higher obligation than any bond of private friendship whatever, and most certainly higher than any obligation to follow a friend into unwise and criminal courses, to take some share, officially, in the trial and condemnation of their offences. We know that while Essex was under arrest at the Lord Keeper's house, in the autumn of 1599, Bacon incurred the Queen's displeasure on account of his persistent efforts to palliate Essex's conduct, mitigate her anger, and procure his restoration to her favor, not then believing in any treasonable design ; and he succeeded at length, not without some risk to his own fortunes, in bringing about his enlargement in the spring of the next year. And then, he addresses a letter of somewhat like kind to Essex, who had now, for some two years past, ceased to take counsel at Gray's Inn. The letter, as given by Mr. Spedding from an original in Bacon's own hand, runs thus :—

"MY LORD, — No man can better expound my doings than your Lordship, which maketh me need to say the less. Only I humbly pray you to believe that I aspire to the conscience and commendation first of *bonus civis*, which with us is a good and true servant to the Queen, and next of *bonus vir*, that is an honest man. I desire your Lordship also to think that though I confess I love some things much better than I love your Lordship, as the Queen's service, her quiet and contentment, her honour, her favour, the good of my country, and the like, yet I love few persons better than yourself, both for gratitude's sake, and for your own virtues, which cannot hurt but by accident or abuse. Of which my good affection I was ever and am ready to yield testimony by any good offices but with such reservations as yourself cannot but allow: for as I was ever sorry that your Lordship should fly with waxen wings, doubting Icarus' fortune, so for the growing up of your own feathers, specially ostrich's, or any other save of a bird of prey, no man shall be more glad. And this is the axletree whereupon I have turned and shall turn; which to signify to you, though I think you are of yourself persuaded as much, is the cause of my writing; and so I commend your Lordship to God's goodness. From Gray's Inn, this 20th day of July, 1600.

Your Lordship's most humbly,

FR. BACON." <sup>1</sup>

To this letter Essex returns a very courteous and friendly answer, in which he says: —

"Your profession of affection, and offer of good offices, are welcome to me. For answer to them I will say but this: that you have believed I have been kind to you, and you may believe that I cannot be other, either upon humour or mine own election. I am a stranger to all poetical conceits, or else I should say somewhat of your poetical example." <sup>2</sup>

This same poetical conceit reappears more than once in the plays, as for instance in the third part of the "Henry VI.," thus: —

"Glos. Why what a peevish fool was that of Crete,  
That taught his son the office of a fowl?"

<sup>1</sup> *Letters and Life*, by Spedding, II. 190-1.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, 192.



And yet, for all his wings, the fool was drown'd.

*K. Hen.* I, Dædalus; my poor boy, Icarus."

*Act V. Sc. 6.*

What answer Southampton returned, does not appear; but considering that personal relations of a confidential and peculiar nature and of special interest to both must have subsisted between them, underlying these merely political connections and state affairs, and that he had no just reason whatever for being offended with Bacon for his course in the political business, it is to be presumed that this assurance of his continuing friendship was received in the same spirit in which it was given. At any rate, it is certain that, after his liberation (though he was imprisoned again for a short time in 1603, on account of a sudden quarrel and high words with Lord Gray in the Queen's presence,<sup>1</sup>) he was very soon entirely restored to favor, with a full restoration of his titles, and was made Warden of the New Forest for life, in 1607,<sup>2</sup> the same year in which Bacon himself was made Solicitor-General. In 1609, he was one of the famous Virginia Company, organized under the royal auspices for the planting of new colonies and making "new nations," of which Sir Francis Bacon was also a member; and in 1610, he became reconciled with Philip, Earl of Montgomery, who, as well as his brother, the Earl of Pembroke, was also a member of this Company. And the Company's fleet, which sailed from the Thames, under Somers, in 1609, "met on its voyage at sea those singular and poetic storms and trials," which added "the still vexed Bermoothes" to the British Empire, and the "Tempest" to the world's literature.<sup>3</sup>

While this change in the state is taking place, we find Bacon making all reasonable efforts to gain a foothold with the new sovereign, and not without success in due time

<sup>1</sup> Nichols' *Prog. K. James I.*, I. 198.

<sup>2</sup> *Mem. of the Court of James I.*, by Lucy Aiken, II. 230-243.

<sup>3</sup> *Pers. Hist. of Lord Bacon*, by Dixon, 197-200.

and for a beginning we have this very notable letter, addressed by him to "Master Davis, then gone to the King, at his first entrance". —

"MASTER DAVIS, — Though you went on the sudden, yet you could not go before you had spoken with yourself to the purpose, which I will now write. And therefore I know it shall be altogether needless, save that I meant to show you that I was not asleep. Briefly, I commend myself to your love and the well using my name; as well in repressing and answering for me, if there be any biting or nibbling at it in that place; as by imprinting a good conceit and opinion of me, chiefly in the King (of whose favour I make myself comfortable assurance); as otherwise in that court. And not only so, but generally to perform to me all the good offices, which the variety of your wit can suggest to your mind, to be performed to one, with whose affection you have so great sympathy; and in whose fortune you have so great interest. So desiring you to be good to concealed poets, I continue." <sup>1</sup>

Now, this could be no other than Mr. John Davis of the Middle Temple (as the name is spelled by Nichols, or *Davies*, as it is written by Anthony Wood, Chalmers, and Craik), an Oxford scholar, and the distinguished poet, lawyer, judge, and statesman, already named as the author of "*Nosce Teipsum, or the Immortality of the Soul*," (published in 1599,) and one of the founders of the metaphysical school of poetry of that day, who, having been expelled from the Middle Temple on account of a quarrel with Mr. Richard Martin, a brother wit and poet, who enjoyed the esteem of Selden and Ben Jonson, was restored to his chambers, in 1601, by the help of Lord Chancellor Egerton (Ellesmere), the friend of Bacon; who went with Lord Hunsdon to meet the King in Scotland on his first entrance, and, on being presented to the king as the author of that poem, was embraced with great favor, and immediately "sworn his man," in March, 1603. He was soon after sent to Ireland as Solicitor-General, where he became a judge

<sup>1</sup> *Works* (Mont.), VII. 114.

of assize; was knighted in 1608, made a King's Serjeant in 1612, elected to Parliament in 1620, and was on the point of being raised to the King's Bench, when he died in 1626. According to Anthony Wood, he "was held in esteem by the noted scholars of the time, as W. Cambden, Sir Jo. Harrington the poet, Ben Jonson, facete Hoskins," and others; and at the date of this letter, which 'by the address' must have been written some time in March, 1603, it is evident that he was so intimate with Francis Bacon that it was presumed he would understand what was meant when he was desired "to be good to concealed poets"! <sup>1</sup>

Of this same metaphysical school was the learned poet, John Donne, a Cambridge man, who had been admitted to Lincoln's Inn, and accompanied the Earl of Essex on his expedition to Cadiz in 1596, and against the Islands in 1597, and, on his return to England, became the chief secretary of Lord Chancellor Egerton (Ellesmere), and an inmate of his family; whence it is hardly possible he should not have been well acquainted with Francis Bacon. He afterwards took orders and became Preacher at Lincoln's Inn, and subsequently Dean of St. Paul's; but there seems to be no particular mention of his acquaintance with Bacon, beyond the statement of Nichols, that on the 24th of March 1617-18, the Lord Chancellor Bacon (whom Ellesmere had recommended for his successor), the Earl of Southampton, Secretary Winwood, and others, attended St. Paul's to hear a sermon from Dr. Donne.

It is pretty certain, however, that, in the list of these associates, there were some other persons, Essex and Southampton among them, who would have understood this letter equally well. In a familiar letter addressed to Essex, in January 1595, while the question of the Solicitorship was still pending, Bacon throws in a similar allusion, thus: "Desiring your good Lordship nevertheless not to con

<sup>1</sup> Nichols' *Prog. K. James I.*, I. 52; II. 198 n. (1), London, 1828; Wood's *Athen. Oxon.*, II. 400; Chalmers' *Eng. Poets*, V. 75.





lived in his imagination. It appears in the epistle dedicatory of the "Venus and Adonis," thus: "I know not how the world will censure me for choosing so strong a prop to support so weak a burthen." In a letter to the King, we find this expression: "For in that other poor prop of my estate, which is the farming of the petty writs;" so, in Shakespeare, we have like expressions:—

"Sweet Duke of York, our prop to lean upon."—*3 Henry VI.*

"Two props of virtue for a Christian."—*Richard III., Act II. Sc. 7.*

And again,—

"*Gob.* Marry, God forbid! the boy was the very staff of my age, my very prop.

*Laun. [Aside.]* Do I look like a cudgel, or a hovel-post, a staff, or a prop?"—*Merchant of Venice, Act II. Sc. 4.*

And again,—

"You take my house when you do take the prop  
That doth sustain my house."—*Ibid., Act IV. Sc. 1.*

And speaking of those "illustrative examples" and that "true art," in which there was to be some departure from "the customary fashion," Bacon remarks in the *Scaling Ladder*, that "the industry and happiness of man" are not to be "indissolubly bound, as it were, to a single pillar"; and in his "Observations on a Libel," he uses the expression, "*their ancient pillar of lying wonders being decayed.*" And this same pillar is a frequent figure in Shakespeare, as thus:—

"And call them pillars that will stand to us."  
*3 Henry VI., Act II. Sc. 5.*

And again,—

"I charge you by the law,  
Whereof you are a well-deserving pillar,  
Proceed to judgment."

*Merchant of Venice, Act IV. Sc. 1.*

By itself alone, this use of a single word, or figure, might very well be deemed a trivial coincidence, or the mere result of common use; but when it is found that this is a

favorite metaphor in both, and only one of innumerable similitudes of like or even much stronger kind in these writings, it may come to have some significance. In the Dedication to the "Rape of Lucrece," the writer says: "What I have done is yours, what I have to do is yours; being part in all I have devoted yours;" — a declaration which is at least consistent enough with the plan of the supposed arrangement.



## CHAPTER III.

### FURTHER PROOFS.

"Now for the Athenian question; you discourse well, *Quid igitur agendum est* I will shoot my fool's bolt, since you will have it so." — BACON TO ESSEX (1598).

"*Orl.* You are the better at proverbs, by how much — A fool's bolt is soon shot." — *Henry V., Act III. Sc. 7, (1599).*

### § 1. PARALLEL WORKS.

FRANCIS BACON was engaged, during the same period and afterwards, in writing and publishing works in prose on kindred and parallel subjects, as for instance, in particular, his Masques, the Essays, the Fable of Cupid, the Wisdom of the Ancients, the New Atlantis, the Happy Memory, the Discourse in Praise of the Queen, the Characters of Julius and Augustus Cæsar, the Histories of Henry VII. and Henry VIII., the Advancement of Learning, his Speeches, and the Great Instauration of Science and Philosophy; indeed, the whole of his works may come into the comparison, not excepting the *Novum Organum* itself. He was sounding all the depths and hidden mysteries of Nature, threading the labyrinth of all philosophy, and scaling with ladders the heights of the empyrean. A critical comparison of these writings with the plays and poems in question, it is firmly believed, will be sufficient to satisfy any reasonable mind, at all competent to judge of such a matter, not merely of that general resemblance which has been long ago frequently observed, and always attributed to the common usage and style of that age, but of such close similitudes in the thought, style, and diction as to leave no room for doubt of the absolute identity of the

authorship. The Essays, the Wisdom of the Ancients, the Letters, the Advancement of Learning, the Henry VII., and the New Atlantis, especially, abound in parallel topics, similar peculiarities of idea, like diction, and identical expressions; and the same solidity, brevity, and beauty of style and manner, and a like power of imagination, pervades them all. It is scarcely possible to doubt, for instance, that the Essay on Masques and Triumphs came from the same mind as Hamlet's instructions to the players, nor that the "Winter's Tale" came from the same source as the Essay on Gardens.

The "New Atlantis" was written as one of his feigned histories, or natural stories, or types and models, and with a main purpose of illustrating the new doctrines and methods, which the author was endeavoring to institute, and to present, as it were, a model of his idea of a College of the Universal Science. It is said to have given origin to the Royal Society of London, which is, however, an institution of somewhat different kind and scope.

On a general comparison of this work with the "Tempest," the similitude of the one to the other, in many points of the story, the leading ideas, the scene and conception of the whole, is very evident; and some parts of it may be traced in the "Timon of Athens." Like the island of Atlantis, Prospero's isle is situated afar off in the midst of the ocean, somewhere near "the still vex'd Bermoothes," but hitherto remote from all visitation of civilized men. Prospero, in his "full poor cell," where all the mysteries of science and the secrets of Nature are unfolded to him, attended by his master-spirit, Ariel, the genius of knowledge, is but another Solomon, with "an aspect as if he pitied men," in his House or College of the Six Days Works, in the island of Atlantis. Prospero, like Democritus and Anaxagoras, seems to have believed that "the truth of nature lieth hid in certain deep mines and caves,"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Adv. of Learning, Works* (Mont.), II. 131.

and his oracles, like those delivered to the Indian Prince in the Masque, came out of "one of the holiest vaults";<sup>1</sup> as Polonius says, in the play:—

"If circumstances lead me, I will find  
Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed  
Within the centre." — *Hamlet*, Act II. Sc. 2.

Bacon frequently alludes to that "feigned supposition that Plato maketh of the cave."<sup>2</sup> Indeed, the cave, as we know, was a traditional source of the divinest wisdom with the ancient philosophers and poets. Plato takes his disciple into a dark cave, in order to bring to light some of the abstrusest doctrines and innermost secrets of his divine philosophy. Tasso's learned magician, Ubaldo, who was born a Pagan, but was regenerated by divine grace, also had his secret seat in a hidden cave, wherein he was yet not far from heaven; nor were his wonderful works done in virtue of infernal spirits, but of the study of Nature:—

"Ma spiando men vo da lor vestigi,  
Qual in se virtù celi o l'erba o 'l fonte:  
E gli altri arcani di Natura ignoti  
Contemplo, e delle stelle i varii moti.  
XLIII. Perocche no ognor lunge dal' cielo  
Tra sotterranei chiostri e la mia stanza."

*Giur. Lib. XIV. 42-3.*

In the conception of Caliban, the author clearly intends to shadow forth his views of the savage island races, ethnologically considered, and he discloses the idea, which was doubtless Bacon's opinion, as it was that of Plato, that these savages were indigenous to the soil on which they were found, and that the races of men, like the rest of the animal kingdom, were created in distinct centres, or had a separate development, on different continents, and on a graduated scale of ascending types of form, rising by degrees

<sup>1</sup> *Masque*; Spedding's *Letters and Life*, I. 388.

<sup>2</sup> *Adv. of Learning*, Bk. II.



In the course of "a length and infinity of time,"<sup>1</sup> from apes to savages, and from savages to the higher types of civilized men; as the science of paleontology now more clearly demonstrates, according to the principles of zoölogy, and according to the Transcendental Architectonic of the Divine Idea;—of all which he had been able to obtain something more than a mere hint even from Plato. And so he writes down Caliban

"A devil, a born devil, on whose nature  
Nurture can never stick."—*Tempest*, Act IV. Sc. 1.

The "Midsummer-Night's Dream" is a work somewhat like in character, in which the writer evidently means to exhibit, not merely the invisible spirit of Nature under various forms of fable, but also the first dawnings of a human intelligence, even in the lower animals, and the effect of Orpheus' music and "universal philosophy" upon them, when "they all stood about him gently and sociably, as in a theatre, listening only to the concords of his lyre," which could "draw the wild beasts and the woods";—for "Orpheus himself,—a man admirable and truly divine, who being master of all harmony, subdued and drew all things after him by sweet and gentle measures,—may pass by an easy metaphor for philosophy personified";<sup>2</sup>—and also the universal nature of love, after the accounts which Bacon says are "given by the poets of Cupid or Love," which "are not properly applicable to the same person," the ancient Cupid being different from the younger Cupid, the son of Venus; "yet the discrepancy is such that one may see where the confusion is and where the similitude, and reject the one and receive the other."<sup>3</sup> And so Titania says to "Bottom with an ass' head,"—

"I'll give thee fairies to attend on thee;  
And they shall fetch thee jewels from the deep,  
And sing while thou on pressed flowers doth sleep:

<sup>1</sup> Plato.      <sup>2</sup> *Wisd. of the Anc.* (Orpheus), *Works* (Boston), XIII. 110

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* (Cupid), 122.

And I will purge thy mortal grossness so,  
That thou shalt like an airy spirit go."—*Act III. Sc. 1.*

And again :

*"Tit.* What, wilt thou hear some music, sweet love?

*Bot.* I have a reasonably good ear in music: let us have the  
tongs and bones.

*Tit.* My Oberon! what visions have I seen!

Methought I was enamour'd of an ass.

*Ober.* There lies your love.

*Tit.* How came these things to pass?

O, how mine eyes do loath his visage now!

*Ober.* Silence, a while. — Robin, take off his head.

Titania, music call; and strike more dead

Than common sleep, of all these five, the sense.

*Tit.* Music, ho! music! such as charmeth sleep."—*Act IV. Sc. 1.*

"For," continues Bacon, "as the works of wisdom surpass in dignity and power the works of strength, so the labours of Orpheus surpass the labours of Hercules. . . . And all this went on for some time with happy success and great admiration; till at last certain Thracian women, under the stimulation and excitement of Bacchus, came where he was; and first they blew such a hoarse and hideous blast upon a horn, that the sound of his music could no longer be heard for the din: whereupon the charm being broken that had been the bond of that order and good-fellowship, confusion began again; the beasts returned each to his several nature and preyed one upon the other as before; the stones and woods stayed no longer in their places: while Orpheus himself was torn to pieces by the women in their fury, and his limbs scattered about the fields: at whose death, Helicon (river sacred to the Muses) in grief and indignation buried his waters under the earth, to reappear elsewhere."<sup>1</sup> With which compare these allusions in the play,<sup>2</sup> in which Hercules, Bacchus, Orpheus, and the Thracian women crop out in the same order, thus:—

<sup>1</sup> *Wisd. of the Anc.* (Orpheus), *Works* (Boston), XIII. 111.

<sup>2</sup> The italics are those of the play.

**"Phil.** There is a brief, how many sports are ripe;  
**Make** choice of which your highness will see first.

[Giving a paper.

*Lys.* [Reads.] 'The battle with the Centaurs, to be sung  
 By an Athenian eunuch to the harp.'

*Thes.* We'll none of that: that have I told my love,  
 In glory of my kinsman Hercules.

*Lys.* 'The riot of the tipsy Bacchanals,  
 Tearing the Thracian singer in their rage.'

*Thes.* That is an old device; and it was play'd  
 When I from Thebes came last a conqueror.

*Lys.* 'The thrice three Muses mourning for the death  
 Of learning, late deceas'd in beggary.'

*Thes.* That is some satire, keen and critical,  
 Not sorting with a nuptial ceremony.

*Lys.* 'A tedious brief scene of young Pyramus,  
 And his love Thisbe: very tragical mirth.'

*Thes.* Merry and tragical! Tedious and brief!  
 That is, hot ice, and wondrous strange snow.

How shall we find the concord of this discord? — *Act V. Sc. 1.*

How shall we discover "where the confusion is and where the similitude"!

The younger Cupid, however, according to Bacon, "applied the appetite to an individual object. From Venus, therefore, comes the general disposition, from Cupid the more exact sympathy. Now the general disposition depends upon causes near at hand, the particular sympathy upon principles more deep and fatal, and as if derived from that ancient Cupid, who is the source of all exquisite sympathy."

And so, we have it in the play, thus: —

*"Lys."* [Hernia], for aught that ever I could read,  
 Could ever hear by tale or history,  
 The course of true love never did run smooth;  
 But, either it was different in blood, —

*Her.* O cross! too high to be enthrall'd to low!

*Lys.* Or else misgraffed, in respect of years; —

*Her.* O spite! too old to be engaged to young!

*Lys.* Or else it stood upon the choice of merit: —

*Her.* O Hell! to choose love by another's eyes!

*Lys.* Or, if there were a sympathy in choice,  
 War, death, or sickness did lay siege to it,

<sup>1</sup> *Wisd. of the Anc. (Cupid), Works (Boston), XIII. 125.*



Making it momentary as a sound,  
 Swift as a shadow, short as any dream,  
 Brief as the lightning in the collied night,  
 That, in a spleen, unfolds both heaven and earth,  
 And ere a man hath power to say, — 'Behold!'  
 The jaws of darkness do devour it up:  
 So quick bright things come to *confusion*.

*Her.* If, then, true lovers have been ever crossed  
 It stands as an *edict in destiny*." — *Act I. Sc. 1.*

Wherein we have a repetition of this same *confusion*, this *sympathy*, and these *principles more deep and fatal*. And for this play, the scene shall be "Athens; and a wood not far from it." It is very much such a scene as that of "the Forest of Arden," in the "As You Like It," or that of the "Timon," which was "Athens; and the woods adjoining"; but the object, in this play, is "the culture and cure of the mind," in respect of this matter of love, and not now "in points of fortune." And the subject compasses the entire scale of being, and stretches, in like manner as in the "Timon," from "the woodlands, as it were, of nature," even into the commonwealth of Athens, and endeavors "to climb by regular succession to the height of things, like so many tops of mountains."<sup>1</sup> At least, the writer will himself view the subject from these tops and these "uppermost elevations of nature, where his station will be serene" and his "prospects delightful," as from that cliff of Plato, which, says Bacon, was "raised above the confusion of things:" —

"We will, fair Queen, up to the mountain's top,  
 And mark the musical confusion  
 Of hounds and echo in conjunction.

*Hip.* . . . . I never heard  
 So musical a discord, such sweet thunder." — *Act IV. Sc. 1.*

But the scene is, for the most part, in "a wood near Athens," where fairies and spirits "do wander everywhere, for

"Czr intent  
 Was to be gone from Athens, where we might

<sup>1</sup> Scaling-ladder.

Without the peril of the Athenian law —

*Ege.* Enough, enough! my lord, you have enough.

I beg the law, the law, upon his head." — *Act IV. Sc. 1.*

And we are now to be taken into the very region of this Love, which is "the appetite or instinct of primal matter," says Bacon, "or, to speak more plainly, *the natural motion of the atom*; which is indeed the original and unique force that constitutes and fashions all things out of matter;" as in the imagery of these lines of the "As You Like It," thus:—

"*Phebe.* . . . Thou tell'st me there is murder in my eye;  
'T is pretty, sure, and very probable,  
That eyes, that are the frail'st and softest things,  
Who shut their coward gates on atomies,  
Should be called tyrants, butchers, murderers!" — *Act III. Sc. 5.*

"For," continues the philosopher, "the summary law of nature, that impulse of desire impressed by God upon the primary particles of matter which makes them come together, and which by repetition and multiplication produces all the variety of nature, is a thing which mortal thought may glance at, but can hardly take in":<sup>1</sup>—

"*Tit.* . . . Fairies, be gone, and be all ways away.<sup>2</sup>  
So doth the woodbine the sweet honeysuckle  
Gently entwist; the female ivy so  
Enrings the barky fingers of the elm." — *Act IV. Sc. 1.*

And again, in the "As You Like It":—

"*Ros.* There's a girl goes before the priest: and, certainly, a woman's thought runs before her actions.

*Orl.* So do all thoughts; they are wing'd." — *Act IV. Sc. 1.*

Even the animals partake of the universal enchantment in this play:—

"When in that moment (so it came to pass),  
Titania wak'd, and straightway lov'd an ass." — *Act III. Sc. 2.*

<sup>1</sup> *Wisd. of the Anc.* (Cupid), *Works* (Boston), XIII. 123.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. White reads, "be a while away," adopting one of Collier's forgeries, which is too tame: it was of the very nature of these fairies, representing the spirit of universal Nature, to be "all ways away."

But, says the philosopher again, "the fable relates to the cradle and infancy of nature, and pierces deep," and we shall have a play, now, which shall be

"As the remembrance of an idle gawd,  
Which in my childhood I did dote upon";—

and things

"More strange than true: I never may believe  
These antique fables, nor these fairy toys.  
Lovers and madmen have such seething brains,  
Such shaping fantasies, that apprehend  
More than cool reason ever comprehends.  
The lunatic, the lover, and the poet,  
Are of imagination all compact":— *Act V. Sc. 1.*

like a child; for Cupid "is described with great elegance as a little child, and a child forever; for things compounded are larger and are affected by age; whereas the primary seeds of things, or atoms, are minute, and remain in perpetual infancy." — <sup>1</sup>

"*Thes.* Love, therefore, and tongue-tied simplicity  
In least speak most, to my capacity."— *Act V. Sc. 1.*

And therefore, we will have here a dumb show of "Wall and Moonshine," and a mere piece of child's play:—

"*Hip.* This is the silliest stuff that ever I heard.

*Thes.* The best in this kind are but shadows; and the worse are no worse, if imagination amend them."— *Act V. Sc. 1.*

"*Dem.* These things seem small, and undistinguishable,  
Like far-off mountains turned into clouds.

*Her.* Methinks I see things with parted eye,  
When every thing seems double.

*Hel.* So methinks:  
And I have found Demetrius, like a jewel,  
Mine own, and not mine own.

*Dem.* It seems to me  
That yet we sleep, we dream."— *Act IV. Sc. 1.*

Very like; but, nevertheless, "all compounds (to one that considers them rightly) are masked and clothed. . . .

<sup>1</sup> *Wisd. of the Anc.* (Cupid), *Works* (Boston), XIII. 124.



The blindness, likewise, of Cupid, has an allegorical meaning full of wisdom. For it seems that this Cupid, whatever he be, has very little providence; but directs his course, like a blind man groping, by whatever he finds nearest; which makes the supreme divine Providence all the more to be admired, as that which contrives out of subjects peculiarly empty and destitute of providence, and as it were blind, to educe by a fatal and necessary law all the order and beauty of the universe":<sup>1</sup>

"*Hel.* Things base and vile, holding no quantity,  
Love can transpose to form and dignity:  
Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind,  
And therefore is wing'd Cupid painted blind:  
Nor hath Love's mind of any judgment taste;  
Wings, and no eyes, figure unheedy haste:  
And therefore is Love said to be a child,  
Because in choice he often is beguil'd.  
As waggish boys in game themselves forswear,  
So the boy Love is perjur'd everywhere."—*Act I. Sc. 2.*

And,

"When they next wake, all this derision  
Shall seem a dream and fruitless vision;  
And back to Athens shall the lovers wend,  
With league, whose date till death shall never end."  
*Act III. Sc. 2.*

And the whole thing,

"Such tricks hath strong imagination,"

shall pierce so deep, that "it shall be called Bottom's dream, because it hath no bottom"; for this Cupid is, "next to God, the cause of causes—itsself without a cause."<sup>2</sup> And such certainly is the judgment of the sacred philosopher, when he says, "He hath made all things beautiful according to their seasons; also he hath submitted the world to man's inquiry, yet so that men cannot find out the work which God worketh from the beginning to the end."<sup>3</sup> And again, we have a touch of this same deep-sounding philosophy, in the "As You Like It," thus:—

<sup>1</sup> *Wisd. of the Anc.* (Cupid), 125.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* (Cupid), 123

<sup>3</sup> *Essay of the Vicissitude of Things.*

*Ros.* O coz, coz, coz, my pretty little coz, that thou didst know how many fathom deep I am in love! But it cannot be sounded; my affection hath an unknown bottom, like the Bay of Portugal.

*Cel.* Or rather, bottomless; that as you pour affection in, it runs out.

*Ros.* No; that same wicked bastard of Venus, that was begot of thought, conceived of spleen, and born of madness; that blind rascally boy, that abuses every one's eyes, because his own are out, let him be judge how deep I am in love." — *Act IV. Sc. 1.*

The object and purpose of these plays may receive some further illustration from the following account of Orpheus' Theatre, where, says Bacon, "all beasts and birds assembled, and forgetting their several appetites, some of prey, some of game, some of quarrel, stood all sociably together, listening to the airs and accords of the harp; the sound whereof no sooner ceased, or was drowned by some louder noise, but every heart returned to his own nature: wherein is aptly described the nature and condition of men, who are full of savage and unreclaimed desires of profit, of lust, of revenge; which as long as they give ear to precepts, to laws, to religion, sweetly touched with eloquence and persuasion of books, of sermons, of harangues, so long is society and peace maintained; but if these instruments be silent, or that sedition and tumult make them not audible, all things dissolve into anarchy and confusion."<sup>1</sup>

This last expression may call to mind the "Tempest," in which all things were to dissolve and "leave not a rack behind," and "deeper than did ever plummet sound," he would drown his book; which word *drown*, having got much into use with the writer, will drop out occasionally even in much graver works: as when he speaks of the Lord Chancellor Morton, who proposed a law against conspiring the death of a King's Counsellor, as "drowning the envy of it in a general law."<sup>2</sup>

And this same teaching, drawn from "Orpheus' Theatre," reappears more largely in the "Merchant of Venice," thus:—

<sup>1</sup> *Adv. of Learn.; Works* (Mont.), II. 177.

<sup>2</sup> *History of Henry VII.; Works* (Boston), XI. 131.

"*Lor.* How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!  
 Here we will sit, and let the sounds of music  
 Creep in our ears: soft stillness and the night  
 Become the touches of sweet harmony.  
 Sit, Jessica: look, how the floor of Heaven  
 Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold;  
 There 's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st  
 But in his motion like an angel sings,  
 Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins:  
 Such harmony is in immortal souls;  
 But, whilst this muddy vesture of decay  
 Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.

*Enter MUSICIANS.*

Come, ho! and wake Diana with a hymn:  
 With sweetest touches pierce your mistress' ear,  
 And draw her home with music. [*Music.*]

*Jess.* I am never merry when I hear sweet music.

*Lor.* The reason is, your spirits are attentive:  
 For do but note a wild and wanton herd,  
 Or race of youthful and unhandled colts,  
 Fetching mad bounds, bellowing, and neighing loud,  
 Which is the hot condition of their blood;  
 If they but hear, perchance, a trumpet sound,  
 Or any air of music touch their ears,  
 You shall perceive them make a mutual stand.  
 Their savage eyes turn'd to a modest gaze  
 By the sweet power of music: therefore the poet  
 Did feign that Orpheus drew trees, stones, and floods;  
 Since nought so stockish, hard, and full of rage,  
 But music for the time doth change his nature.  
 The man that hath no music in himself,  
 Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,  
 Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils:  
 The motions of his spirit are dull as night,  
 And his affections dark as Erebus.  
 Let no such man be trusted. — Mark the music." — *Act V. Sc. 1.*

Here, we have not only the same general scope of thought, ideas, and imagery, but certain particular and unmistakable earmarks by which we may know the identity of the writer; as for instance, in the use of the phrases "sweet power of music" and "concord of sweet sounds," "sweetly touched" and "sweetest touches," the words "savage" and "silent," the sound of "a trumpet" heard and a "hideous blast upon



a horn," the "motions of his spirit" and "the natural motion of the atom," and the discourse running on "the affections"; and in the prose, when the music ceases, every heart returns "to his own nature"; but in the poetry, "music for the time doth change his nature." And indeed the careful reader, who is familiar with his style and manner and diction, cannot fail to recognize him in every line.

Similar ideas touching the history of the human race and the order of divine providence in the creation are contained elsewhere in the writings of Bacon. Concerning the countries of the New World, then lately discovered, he says, "the great winding-sheets that bury all things in oblivion are two: deluges and earthquakes."<sup>1</sup> He thought it probable that the people of the West Indies were "a newer and younger people than the people of the old world"; and he says, "it is much more likely that the destruction that hath heretofore been there was not by earthquakes (as the Egyptian priest told Solon concerning the Island of Atlantis, *that it was swallowed by an earthquake*), but rather that it was desolated by a particular deluge. . . . Their Andes, likewise, or mountains, are far higher than those with us; whereby it seems that the remnants of *generation of men* [*reliquias stirpis hominum*'] were in such a particular deluge saved":<sup>2</sup>

"Gon. If in Naples  
I should report this now, would they believe me?  
If I should say, I saw such islanders,  
(For certes, these are people of the island)  
Who, though they are of monstrous shape, yet, note,  
Their manners are more gentle, kind, than of  
*Our human generation* you shall find  
Many, nay, almost any.  
Pros. [*Aside.*] Honest lord,  
Thou hast said well; for some of you there present,  
Are worse than devils." — *Tempest*, Act III. Sc. 3.

He thus distinctly intimates an opinion that the races of

<sup>1</sup> *Essay of the Vicissitude of Things*.

<sup>2</sup> *Essays*, Works (Mont.), I. 187-9; Works (Boston), XII. 274.

mankind, on different continents, had been subjected in each to a distinct series of geological changes in the surface of the globe, implying that the history of their origin must be carried so far back into "the dark backward and abysm of time" as to exhaust the antiquity of all historical, archæological or ethnological data, reaching far beyond the remotest tradition that has floated down on the stream of human memory even into purely geological time, and into the very "winding-sheets of oblivion," and that river of Lethe, which, he says, "runneth as well above ground as below"; an opinion that is fully confirmed by the later and more certain scientific demonstrations. "But," he continues, "in the other two destructions, by deluge and earthquake, it is further to be noted, that the remnant of people which happen to be reserved, are commonly ignorant and mountainous people, that can give no account of the time past; so that the oblivion is all one as if none had been left":—

"*Gon.* When we were boys,  
Who would believe that there were mountaineers  
Dew-lapp'd like bulls, whose throats had hanging at 'em  
Wallets of flesh? or that there were such men,  
Whose heads stood in their breasts? which now we find  
Each putter-out on fire for one will bring us  
Good warrant of." — *Tempest, Act III. Sc. 3.*

In these opinions we may discover traces, also, of Plato's account of the origin of the human race, which he conceived to be "from a length and infinity of time, and the mutations in it," and that there had been "frequent destructions of the human race through deluges and diseases and many other events, in which some small family of mankind was left"; and "that those who then escaped the destruction, were nearly—some hill-shepherds, preserved on the tops (of mountains) like some slight fire preserving (careless) of the human race";<sup>1</sup> that is, saved not so much by human care as by the divine providence; an opinion, by

<sup>1</sup> *Laus*, Book III ; *Works of Plato* (Bohn), V. 78.

the way, that comes much nearer the truth of the matter than most modern inquiry.

So Bacon seems to have believed that some time far back in the series of these particular deluges, one continent or island may have been peopled from another, as when "the foul witch," Sycorax, with age and envy "grown into a hoop," mother of the "dull thing," Caliban, the born devil, on whose nature "nurture can never stick," came from Africa, banished "from Argier" to that uninhabited island which lay off somewhere toward "the still-vex'd Bermoothes":—

"Then was this island,  
(Save for the son that she did litter here,  
A freckled whelp, hag-born,) not honour'd with  
A human shape." — *Tempest*, Act I. Sc. 2.

He agreed also with Aristotle, that there was a difference between the races of men, inhabiting different parts of the earth, and between man and man, not unlike that which exists between man and animals. "But for my part," says he, "I take it neither for a brag nor for a wish, but for a truth as he limiteth it. For he saith if there be found such an inequality between man and man as there is between man and beast, or between soul and body, it investeth a right of government: which seemeth rather an impossible case than an untrue sentence. But I hold both the judgment true and the case possible; and such as hath had, and hath a being, both in particular men and nations." And the play even ventures to go farther still, and to hint at a difference as wide as a difference of species in the genus (wherein, again, our modern science is also not far behind him) thus:—

"1 *Mur.* We are men, my liege.  
*Macb.* Ay, in the catalogue ye go for men,  
As hounds, and greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels, curs,  
Shoughs, water-rugs, and demi-wolves, are clep'd  
All by the name of dogs: the valued file  
Distinguishes the swift, the slow, the subtle,  
The house-keeper, the hunter, every one



According to the gift which bounteous Nature  
Hath in him clos'd; whereby he does receive  
Particular addition, from the bill  
That writes them all alike: and so of men."

*Macbeth, Act III. Sc. 1.*

These learned investigations, together with the Summary (or Higher) Philosophy, of which Bacon had some knowledge, but of which such a man as William Shakespeare could have had but little notion, might lead up the author of the "Tempest" and the "Midsummer Night's Dream," beyond the Scriptural allegories of Noah's Ark and the Garden of Eden, to those more comprehensive and more profoundly philosophical conceptions of things, which are distinctly imaged forth in these beautiful dramas. At the same time, it will be borne in mind that the "Midsummer Night's Dream" was written as early as 1594, and the "Tempest" in 1611, while the "New Atlantis" was not written until after 1620, and the "Wisdom of the Ancients" was first printed (in Latin) in 1610; and this effectually excludes all possibility that William Shakespeare could have borrowed from Bacon in the writing of these plays. And the like is true in many other instances. On the other hand, like instances will be given to show, that Francis Bacon could not have borrowed from Shakespeare, otherwise than from himself.

Furthermore, it may be observed, in this connection, that those remarkable passages, which are most frequently quoted by the great lights of modern literature in proof of the deep insight of Shakespeare and his superiority as a poet, may be taken as evidence that the writer had attained to those deeply metaphysical ideas concerning the constitution of the universe and the nature and destiny of man in it, which have been entertained in any age, as they now are, by a small number of the profoundest thinkers and most rare and learned men only. The writings of Bacon, carefully studied, will show that he was familiar with these heights and depths, and that, having lighted his torch at

the glorious sun of Plato (not neglecting Aristotle), he was, with that illumination and the help of his own newer methods, exploring "the universal world," and endeavoring to instaurate, as it were in advance, not the experimental science merely, but the higher philosophy of the XIXth century. Without the help of such studies, there is no possibility, now, for any man to attain to this philosophy; much less William Shakespeare, or even Bacon himself, in that age. That Shakespeare had ever turned his attention at all to studies which lay in that direction, we have no other proof than what the plays themselves afford; but, on the contrary, we have pretty decisive evidence, in his personal history, that he could never have done so. There was no other man of that time but Bacon that we know of, who had done so to the same extent as he; for even that Platonic thinker and poet, George Herbert, is not to be excepted; or if there be any exception, he will be found to have been, like Sidney, Greville, Sackville, Raleigh, Herbert, Hooker, Selden, Donne, or Cudworth, a child of the University, that could bring to his work as an author the discipline and finish of accurate and thorough scholarship, the rich spoils of classic antiquity, and the fruits of years of learned research, in the course of which the depths of Plato must have been sounded. But no other man can be named, who is not, upon considerations of another kind, completely excluded from the question of this authorship; and hence a ground of argument of no little weight, that Bacon must have been the man.

The Wisdom of the Ancients, and the Characters of Julius and Augustus Cæsar, may show the direction of his studies, and they disclose the source of that familiar acquaintance with the Grecian mythology and the Roman history, and with the ancient manners and customs, which is so distinctly displayed in these poetical works, and particularly in the "Troilus and Cressida," the "Timon of Athens," the "Antony and Cleopatra," the "Coriolanus," and the

"Julius Cæsar." The Memory and Discourse of Queen Elizabeth find a parallel in Cranmer's Speech in compliment to King James and "the maiden phoenix," his predecessor; the History of Henry VII. in the tragedy of Richard III. and the other plays founded on English history and the Wars of the Roses; the intended History of Henry VIII., in the tragedy of that name; the New Atlantis, in prose, in these types and models in verse; and the Essays, the Advancement, the Natural History, and the Novum Organum, may render the civil and moral maxims, the natural science, and the metaphysical philosophy of the plays possible for their author, if he be taken to have been Francis Bacon.

#### § 2. BEN JONSON.

Ben Jonson must have been in the secret of this arrangement. Steevens thought the Dedication and Preface of Heming and Condell's Folio must have been written by him. He certainly took a large part in bringing this marvellous volume to light, and in parading in the frontispiece the stolid effigies of this mountebank, which probably needed no disguise from the burin of Droeshout to make it a veritable mask of Momus, in imperturbable mock-seriousness, shaking his lance at the eyes of ignorance, "martial in the warlike sound of his surname, *Hastivibrans*,"<sup>1</sup> says garrulous old Fuller; while, at the same time, he slyly inserts, on the opposite page, that significant advice, —

"Reader, looke,  
Not on his picture, but his booke."

The style, manner, and diction of this Dedication and Preface are much more nearly that of Bacon; but it may very well have been Jonson. The story of the players, that Shakespeare never blotted out a line, has already been alluded to; but when it is remembered that Ben Jonson

<sup>1</sup> *Worthies of England*, III. 284.



was an intimate friend and great admirer of Bacon, deeming him "by his works one of the greatest of men and most worthy of admiration that had been in many ages"; that he wrote a poem in honor of "England's High Chancellor," for the festivities at York House on the anniversary of his sixtieth birthday, in which he speaks of him as one

"Whose even thread the Fates spin round and full,  
Out of their choicest and their whitest wool;"

that he was certainly present, if he did not take an active part, in bringing out the "Henry VIII." at the Globe, in 1613; that he was one of those "good pens" whose learned service Bacon employed in the translation of his English works into Latin; that even "in his adversity," after his fall from power, he could not "condole in a word or syllable for him, as knowing no accident could do harm to virtue, but rather help to make it manifest"; and that he was himself a scholar, a critic, and a judge of men; it can scarcely be doubted, either that this anecdote of the players would be in the possession of Bacon, and as likely to be used by him as by Jonson himself, or that Jonson would have the sagacity and the means to discover the secret of this authorship, as well as the honor and good faith to keep it. He knew the cast of Bacon's mind and character. He had read his prose compositions, had translated some of them into Latin, and must have been familiar with his mode of thinking and his style of writing. And it is scarcely credible that he should not have recognized in the plays of Shakespeare, the hand and genius of the master whom he so much admired. That he appreciated this poetry in as high a degree as the critics of later times, even down to our day, may be clearly seen in his poetical "Eulogy" on Shakespeare. It is carefully dedicated to the "Memory" of Shakespeare "and what he hath left us"; and the whole tenor of it is such as to fix the attention of the reader more on the writings than on the man. It was certainly his

opinion, that the great poet had not been merely born, but made:—

“For a good poet’s made as well as born,  
And such wert thou. Look, how the father’s face  
Lives in his issue; even so the race  
Of Shakespeare’s mind and manners brightly shines,  
In his well-turned and true-filed lines;  
In each of which he seems to shake a lance,  
As brandish’d at the eyes of ignorance.”

And the concluding lines of this “Eulogy,” in which the volume itself still makes the principal figure, may be applied with force and equal appropriateness to the other:—

“Shine forth, thou Star of Poets, and with rage,  
Or influence, chide or cheer the drooping stage,  
Which since thy flight from hence hath mourned like night,  
And despairs day, but for thy Volumes’ light.”

There are some vague traditions that Ben Jonson severely criticized the productions of Shakespeare, and was envious of his superiority and his fame. They seem to be founded on the writings of Jonson himself; and from these, it should rather be inferred that Jonson could not really have believed that William Shakespeare was the actual author of the works which were produced in his name. His account of the anecdote of the players runs thus:—“I remember the players have often mentioned it as an honor to Shakespeare, that in writing (whatever he penned) he never blotted out line.” Now, no man knew better than Jonson, not even Pope, the utter impossibility of such works as these dramas being dashed off, in a rapid first draught, at once finished and complete, without a line blotted. That the players thought so, must have been a fine joke for him and Bacon; that the players said so, may be taken as evidence that they thought it a pretty good jest themselves. Bacon transcribed the “*Novum Organum*” some twelve times, before it was finished to his satisfaction. Burke copied his “*French Revolution*” six times, before he would suffer it to receive the final stamp of the press. Smaller poems

may have been sometimes composed and written down at once complete. Goethe tells us, that, sometimes, when he had conceived a sonnet, or a song, he immediately ran to paper, and jotted it down, before it should vanish from his memory. Alfieri wrote his tragedies first in brief prose, then in extended form, and lastly, put them into verse; and Virgil, about to die, after many years of toil, is said to have commended the "*Æneid*" to the flames as not yet finished to his liking. Where is the record in all literary history of extended compositions like these dramas having been spun out in this Arachne-like fashion? The very proposition is well-nigh absurd. Common actors might possibly believe, or imagine, that their facetious manager, amidst the daily bustle of the theatre, and in the few hours of leisure which he could snatch from business, or from sleep, out of his miraculous invention, and with the inspired pen of born genius, could dash off a Hamlet, or a Lear, perfect to a syllable, as easily as twinkle his eye. But the learned and judicious critic, or any capable judge of the matter, will rather turn his search to the retired chambers of Gray's Inn, or to the embowered lodge of Twickenham Park, or to the blooming gardens of Gorhambury, where sat brooding in silence and in private the great soul that had taken all knowledge for his province, hopefully murmuring, "Sir, I lack advancement," and "I eat the air, promise-crammed," yet diligently pursuing his "vast contemplative ends," with plenty of leisure and little business, leading a life "so private" that he had "had no means" to do the Lord Burghley "service,"<sup>1</sup> thin and pale with "inward secret grief," and continually sickly "by untimely going to bed, and then musing *nescio quid* when he should sleep"; and that onward, nearly so, for the space of thirty long years, publicly looking for promotion in the state, while privately elaborating, and doubtless with the most scrupulous care, the great works in prose and verse, which were to carry his name and memory to foreign

<sup>1</sup> Letter to Burghley.



nations and the next ages. No doubt, the original manuscripts which came to the hands of William Shakespeare, or the copies that came into the hands of the players, would be clean and complete, with never a line blotted, — a wonderful miracle, indeed, to the players ! And so, the sonnet sings :—

“How like a Winter hath my absence been  
From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting year?  
What freezings have I felt, what dark days seen?  
What old December's bareness everywhere?  
And yet this time remov'd was summer's time,  
The teeming Autumn big with rich increase,  
Bearing the wanton burthen of the prime,  
Like widow'd wombs after their lord's decease:  
Yet this abundant issue seem'd to me  
But hope of Orphans, and unfather'd fruit,  
For Summer and his pleasures wait on thee,  
And thou away, the very birds are mute,  
Or, if they sing, 't is with so dull a cheer,  
That leaves look pale, dreading the Winter's near.”

*Sonnet xcvii.* <sup>1</sup>

The remainder of Ben Jonson's account of Shakespeare is much in keeping with this hypothesis. He says further: “My answer hath been, *Would he had blotted out a thousand!* which they thought a malevolent speech. I had not told posterity this, but for their ignorance, who chose that circumstance to commend their friend by, wherein he most faulted, and to justify mine own candour, for I love the man, and do honour his memory, on this side idolatry, as much as any. He was, indeed, honest, and of an open and free nature, had an excellent fancy, brave notions, and gentle expressions; wherein he flowed with that facility that sometimes it was necessary he should be stopped: *Sufflaminandus erat*, as Augustus said of Haterius. His wit was in his own power; would the rule of it had been so, too. Many times he fell into those things which could not escape laughter, as when he said in the person of Cæsar, one speaking to

<sup>1</sup> Sonnets (Fac-simile of the ed. of 1609), London, 1862.

him, 'Cæsar, thou dost me wrong,' he replied, 'Cæsar did never wrong, but with just cause;' and such like, which were ridiculous. But he redeemed his vices with his virtues; there was ever more in him to be praised than to be pardoned."<sup>1</sup>

This line, it seems, is not correctly quoted from any known edition of the play; the statement may refer to Shakespeare's mode of speaking the passage as an actor on the stage; and the whole account carries with it an air of irony, and the appearance of a constrained vindication of himself from a malevolent and ridiculous complaint of ignorant persons. His observations relate, in part, to the person of Shakespeare, and, in part, to his supposed productions, perhaps; though in this, he is equivocal and indefinite. If he knew the secret, he certainly meant to keep it. His insinuation, that the rule of his wit was not sufficiently in his power, and that he sometimes made himself ridiculous, probably had some foundation in fact. He could not well refrain from rebuking the folly of the players, nor from vindicating himself from the charge of malevolence towards Shakespeare. With regard to the personal qualities of the man, his opinion may be taken as coming near the truth. These are the qualities of an agreeable companion, a facetious fellow, and a prosperous manager; but they do not account for these plays, nor for that excellent appreciation of their quality, which we find in Ben Jonson's "Eulogy."

The traditions handed down by Fuller are of like import. "Jonson," says he, "was built far higher in learning, solid but slow; but Shakespeare lesser in bulk, but lighter for sailing, could turn with all tides, tack about, and take advantage of all winds, by the quickness of his art and invention." All this is a mere afterthought, and a tale of mythical growth, like his other old saw of *Poeta nascitur*, and his Cornish diamonds, that were not polished by any lapidary; and they may illustrate how "Nature itself was al

<sup>1</sup> Ben Jonson's *Discoveries*.

the art which was used" upon William Shakespeare; but they do not explain the origin of these very extraordinary compositions.

Another traditionary document may be mentioned, which was published in 1643-5, and was believed by Sir Egerton Bridges to have been the work of George Withers, the poet. Withers was born in 1588, and died in 1667, and he may be considered as a contemporary. This document will show, that Lord Bacon, in the opinion of Withers, at least, was entitled to high rank among his contemporaries in the kingdom of Apollo. It is entitled "The Great Assizes holden in Parnassus by Apollo and his Assessours, at which are arraigned Mercurius Brittanicus, Mercurius Aulicus," &c., (periodical publications of that time). It proceeds thus:

"The Members of the Parnassian Court are as follows:—

#### APOLLO.

THE LORD VERULAM, Chancellor of Parnassus.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY, High Constable of Parnassus.

WILLIAM BUDÆUS, High Treasurer.

JOHN PICUS, EARL OF MIRANDULA, High Chamberlaine

JULIUS CÆSAR SCALIGER. ISAAC CASAUBON.

ERASMUS ROTTERDAM. JOHN SELDEN.

JUSTUS LIPSIUS. HUGO GROTIUS.

JOHN BARCKLAY. DANIEL HEINSIUS.

JOHN BODINE. CONRADUS VORSTIUS.

ADRIAN TURNEBUS. AUGUSTINE MASCARDUS.

#### *The Jurors.*

GEORGE WITHERS. MICHAEL DRAYTON.

THOMAS CARY. FRANCIS BEAUMONT.

THOMAS MAY. JOHN FLETCHER.

WILLIAM DAVENANT. THOMAS HAYWOOD.

JOSHUA SYLVESTER. WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

GEORGE SANDERS. PHILIP MASSINGER.

#### *The Malefactors [as in the title.]*

JOSEPH SCALIGER, the Censour of Manners in Parnassus

BEN JONSON, Keeper of the Trophonian Denne.

JOHN TAYLOUR, Cryer of the Court.

EDMUND SPENSER, Clerk of the Assizes."



be sending to Mr. Matthew, unless it were precisely this Folio of 1623: nor does anything appear on record to indicate a later date than this for this very notable postscript. And considering that it was this same Mr. Tobie Matthew, who personated the "Squire" in the masque at Essex's house; that he was "one of the most eccentric characters of that age," an intimate literary friend of Bacon, and a correspondent of long standing, to whom he was in the habit of sending his books as they came out, making him, too, sometimes, his critical "inquisitor"<sup>1</sup> beforehand; that, at this very time, the closest relations of friendship and correspondence subsisted between them, "being," says Bacon, not long after, in a letter to Cottington, "as true a friend as any you or I have;"<sup>2</sup> and that he was himself a scholar, and a son of the Archbishop of York, with whom also Bacon corresponded, and was particularly familiar with Bacon's writings, mind, and character; we shall be prepared not to be so greatly surprised at the intimation given in this postscript, that he knew a secret, respecting which he could not forbear to compliment his Lordship on this occasion; and the more especially, if we may suppose that it was the new Folio that he had before him. The letter runs thus:—

*"To the Lord Viscount St. Alban:—*

"MOST HONORED LORD,—I have received your great and noble token and favour of the 9th of April, and can but return the humblest of my thanks for your Lordship's vouchsafing so to visit this poorest and unworthiest of your servants. It doth me good at heart, that, although I be not where I was in place, yet I am in the fortune of your Lordship's favour, if I may call that fortune, which I observe to be so unchangeable. I pray hard that it may once come in my power to serve you for it; and who can tell but that, as *fortis imaginatio generat casum*, so strong desires may do as much? Sure I am that mine are ever waiting on your

<sup>1</sup> *Letter to Matthew.*

<sup>2</sup> *Letter 1623, Works (Mont.), XII. 445.*

Lordship; and wishing as much happiness as is due to your incomparable virtue, I humbly do your Lordship reverence.

"Your Lordship's most obliged and humble servant,

"TOBIE MATTHEW.

"P. S. The most prodigious wit that ever I knew of my nation, and of this side of the sea, is of your Lordship's name, though he be known by another." (1)

Now, who else but this same Shakespeare could have been considered by Mr. Matthew to be a cover for the most prodigious wit of all England, at that day? or what else could have more naturally prompted this unique postscript than the new History of Henry VII., all sparkling with Shakespearean diamonds, or indeed this Folio, all blazing with the Baconian wit, power, and beauty? It could not have been Bacon as philosopher, statesman, or eminent prose-writer; for all his known works were published under his own name. Neither could the word *wit* have been used here in the more general sense of that day as meaning genius and ability in general; for in this sense, it could only have been applied to these same acknowledged works. It must therefore have been intended in the special sense of the word as now used. That Bacon was a great wit in every sense of the word, needs no demonstration here. We have direct and satisfactory evidence of it in his own writings everywhere; and it has been proverbial with all who have written concerning him, from Ben Jonson to Macaulay. Queen Elizabeth said he "had a great wit and much learning"; Ben Jonson, that he could not "spare or pass by a jest"; Sir Robert Naunton, a contemporary, says of Sir Nicholas Bacon, that he was "an arch-peece of wit, and of wisdom," and "abundantly facetious; which tooke much with the queene"; and he adds that "he was father to that refined wit, which since hath acted a disastrous part on the publique stage, and of late sate in his

<sup>1</sup> Works (Mont.), XII. 468; (III., Philad. 160).

father's roome as lord chancellor";<sup>1</sup> and this testimony of Mr. Matthew that he was a "most prodigious wit" may be taken as settling the question. Clearly, somebody was shining in borrowed feathers, which not only belonged to Bacon, but made him the most prodigious wit of that side of the sea; and of this, Mr. Matthew was unquestionably a competent judge. It could have been no other than that "upstart crow beautified with our feathers," that the incredulous Greene knew for "a *Johannes factotum*" and "the only Shake-scene in a country."

Mr. Matthew was much in the habit of adding postscripts to his letters to Bacon. In one, he asks his lordship to send him "some of his philosophical labours"; and in a letter to Mr. Matthew, Bacon writes: "I have sent you some copies of my book of the 'Advancement,' which you desired, and a little work of my recreation, which you desired not."<sup>2</sup> What this "little work" was, there is no intimation; and it might be altogether too great a stretch of the imagination to suppose it may have been a quarto play. Nevertheless, it may not be unreasonable to believe that these little recreations of his other studies may have helped to furnish the key, by which the secret had been unlocked. In fact, it would be well-nigh incredible, that a scholar, who was so familiar with Bacon and his writings as Ben Jonson, or Sir Tobie Matthew, must have been, should not have discovered the hand and soul of Francis Bacon in these plays of Shakespeare as certainly as a Bernouilli the genius of Newton in the anonymous solution of a mathematical problem, — *ex ungue Leonem*: — especially, when he ventured to write in this manner in the Sonnets:—

"Why is my verse so barren of new pride?  
So far from variation or quick change?  
Why with the time do I not glance aside  
To new-found methods, and to compounds strange?  
Why write I still all one, ever the same,

<sup>1</sup> *Fragmenta Regalia*, 75, (London, 1824).

<sup>2</sup> Letter, *Works* (Philad.), III. 71; (Mont.), XVI., Note A & A. (1606).



And keep invention in a noted weed,  
 That every word doth almost tell my name,  
 Showing their birth, and where they did proceed ? ”  
*Sonnet lxxvi.*

Which wonder shall find an echo in his Prayers, thus : —  
 “ The state and bread of the poor and oppressed have been  
 precious in mine eyes : I have hated all cruelty and hard-  
 ness of heart : I have, though in a despised weed, procured  
 the good of all men.” <sup>1</sup>

#### § 4. CONTEMPORARY WRITERS.

A critical comparison of these poetical works with the writings of contemporary authors will result always in a complete exclusion of them all from any competition for this authorship. Question has been made by some critics as to some few of the earlier and less conspicuous plays, but of the greater ones, and especially of those which have a more philosophical character, as also of the sonnets and poems, no well-grounded doubt has ever been entertained, that they were all the work of one and the same writer. In these, as indeed in all the rest, the style and manner of the genuine Shakespeare are so distinctly marked and so peculiar as at once to distinguish them from the productions of any other writer of that or any other age. The style and genius of Shakespeare have ever been considered, if not unapproachable, at least perfectly *sui generis*. In this comparison, in respect of philosophic depth of insight, knowledge of art, and the fundamental principles of dramatic composition, Ben Jonson, Beaumont, Fletcher, Massinger, Ford, Marlowe, Drayton, and the rest, sink to the level of ordinary writers : their range in the world of thought and knowledge lay far below him. Bacon’s prose, compared with that of other writers of his own or any other age, is no less distinguishable, nor less decidedly characteristic of the individual man.

<sup>1</sup> Prayer, *Works*, (Philad.), II. 405

Sir Walter Raleigh seems to have been considered, by at least one writer,<sup>1</sup> to have been equal to a share in this work. He was indeed a polished courtier, a learned man for that day, and a patron of learning and art, himself a distinguished author in prose and verse, a scientific investigator and a somewhat philosophical thinker. He was thirty-seven years of age when the "Titus Andronicus" appeared, in 1589. His youth was spent abroad in the wars; and, after his introduction at Court, in 1582, his time and attention must have been more or less exclusively occupied with his courtly company, his parliamentary duties, his military expeditions, his voyages of discovery, and his various business transactions, down to the death of the Queen and the beginning of his troubles in 1603; and the "History of the World" and other writings on which he is known to have been employed, while a prisoner in the Tower, will scarcely leave room for the prosecution of a work of this kind. Any theory that these works were the product of a society, or club, or partnership, of two or more individuals, will have to be given up as wholly untenable: it is utterly inadmissible. The earlier part of Raleigh's life was outwardly active, full of personal display, great exploit, and stirring events. He took trunks of books on his voyages, and experimented in chemistry at home; but, on the whole, his time for study must have been small, and his range of thought and knowledge limited, in comparison with Bacon. It is plain from his writings, that his studies in the ancient learning and philosophy, and his acquirements generally, were rather superficial than profound in this comparison. His "Treatise on the Soul" may be taken as a fair test of his philosophic depth; and, compared with Bacon and Shakespeare, it shrinks into the dimensions of a very small affair. And what is still more conclusive of him, as of the rest of his contemporaries, his writings, in prose and verse, exhibit another style and man altogether.

<sup>1</sup> *Phil. of Shaks. Plays Unfolded*, by Delia Bacon, 1857.

## § 5. REASONS FOR CONCEALMENT.

With Bacon himself, a desire to rise in the profession of the law, or his ambition for high place in the State, the plan of life he had chosen to follow, the low reputation of a play-writer, in that age, and the mean condition and estate of all poor poets, the need of a larger liberty and a more daring freedom of thought and expression than he could have ventured to take, without some danger to his fortunes, or even to his personal liberty, at times, if it had been known that he was the author of these plays, and more especially, perhaps, a desire that his reputation, both with his contemporaries and with after times, should finally rest upon his acknowledged writings and his philosophical works in particular, as of greater dignity and better becoming his station and the civil honors he sought to attain, in accordance with the ideas of that age, — these, not to dwell upon other reasons of a philosophical and critical nature, and of a higher and more disinterested character, — are of themselves, perhaps, a sufficient explanation of his wish to cover this authorship, and to remain a concealed poet, in his own time; and especially in the earlier part of his career, when the private arrangement, if it existed, must have been made. In his dedication of the “Colours of Good and Evil” to Lord Mountjoy, in 1595–7, he expressly tells us, that it was his “manner and rule to keep state in contemplative matters.” Lord Coke was not alone among those in high places, at that day, whose opinion was, that play-writers and stage-players were fit subjects for the grand jury as “vagrants,” and that “the fatal end of these five is beggary, — the alchymyst, the monopolist, the concealer, the informer, and the poetaster”;<sup>1</sup> and as it was, Coke and the like of him took “the liberty to disgrace and disable his law,” and constantly sneered at his “book-learning.” Even the Queen herself seized upon it as an excuse

<sup>1</sup> Campbell's *Lives of the Chief Justices*, I. 279.



for refusing him promotion, that "Bacon," as she said, "had a great wit, and much learning, but that in law he could show to the uttermost of his knowledge, and was not deep;" as if inferring the one thing from the other, or as if a man could not know law, and, at the same time, know anything else. In general, it may be admitted that he was in some degree unsuited for a life of executive activity in the administration of affairs. At a later day, he confessed as among the errors of his life "this great one which led the rest, that knowing myself by inward calling to be fitter to hold a book than play a part I have led my life in civil causes, for which I was not very fit by nature, and more unfit by preoccupation of mind."<sup>1</sup> In the state of things that existed in the reigns of Elizabeth and James I. (to be illustrated in the particular history of the play of Richard II.), it will not be difficult to see, that an open avowal of this authorship might have been fatal to all his prospects of elevation in the State, on which he considered the success of his efforts for the advancement of science and the benefit of mankind in a great measure to depend. "But power to do good," he says, "is the true and lawful end of aspiring; for good thoughts (though God accept them), yet towards men are little better than good dreams, except they be put in act; and that cannot be, without power and place as the vantage and commanding ground."<sup>2</sup> The *Novum Organum* by the Lord Verulam, Lord High Chancellor of England, magnificently dedicated to the King, (having passed "the file of his Majesty's judgment," and been found to be "like the wisdom of God that passeth all understanding,") would attract the attention of Europe; but these plays, the "wanton burthen of the prime," which could never pass the royal file, must be thrown upon the stage as

"But hope of orphans, and unfather'd fruit."

<sup>1</sup> *Letter to Bodley.*

<sup>2</sup> *Essay of Great Place.*

They had to take their place, and stand trial upon their own merits, in the open theatre; and this he knew they would do, safely enough, and work out their own salvation, at least for the present.

Towards the close of his life, the scene would be changed, and the matter is to be considered as it would then stand in his view. He is now working in good earnest for the next ages. He will first revise, finish, and republish his former works, and then devote the remainder of life to his greater philosophical labors. He renounces all worldly honors, and mere fame with his contemporaries loses nearly all attraction for him. He seeks a full pardon of his sentence, and a restoration to his seat in the House of Lords, that "a cloud" may be lifted from his name; but when, finally, the summons comes, his answer is: "I have done with such vanities." We have a very distinct intimation in his own words as to what his opinion then was, in respect to fame of this kind; for in his dedicatory epistle to Bishop Andrews, his "ancient and private acquaintance," whom he held "in special reverence," prefixed to that Shakespearean "Dialogue touching an Holy War," written in 1622, he gives an explicit account of his writings and purposes. He compares his fortunes to those of Demosthenes, Cicero, and Seneca, and chooses for himself the example of Seneca, like himself, a learned poet, moralist, statesman and philosopher, who, being banished into a solitary island, "spent his time in writing books of excellent argument and use for all ages," having determined, as he says, "(whereunto I was otherwise inclined) to spend my time wholly in writing; and to put forth that poor talent, or half talent, or what it is, that God hath given me, not as heretofore to particular exchanges, but to banks and mounts of perpetuity, which will not break. Therefore, having not long since set forth a part of my Instauration, which is the work, that in mine own judgment (*si nunquam fallit imago*) I do most esteem, I think to proceed in some new parts thereof.

.... I have a purpose therefore (though I break the order of time) to draw it down to the sense, by some pattern of a Natural Story or Inquisition." But besides these natural stories, which were probably to be something like the "New Atlantis," and some other works particularly named, there was still another class, for which the world might "scramble" and "set up a new English *inquisition*," and upon which he continues in these words:—

"As for my Essays and some other particulars of that nature, I count them but as the recreations of my other studies, and in that sort purpose to continue them; though I am not ignorant that those kind of writings would with less pains and embracement (perhaps) yield more lustre and reputation to my name than those other which I have in hand. But I account the use that a man should seek of the publishing of his own writings before his death, to be but an untimely anticipation of that which is proper to follow a man, and not to go along with him."<sup>1</sup>

Again, speaking of his philosophy in general, he says:—"For myself, nothing which is external to the establishment of its principles is of any interest to me. For neither am I a hungerer after fame, nor have I, after the manner of heresiarchs, any ambition to originate a sect; and, as for deriving any private emolument from such labours, I should hold the thought as base as it is ridiculous. Enough for me the consciousness of desert, and that coming accomplishment of real effects which fortune itself shall not be able to intercept."<sup>2</sup>

He cares little now for any mere lustre of reputation. It is very possible, of course, that all these expressions had reference only to some other prose compositions of a popular character. They do not necessarily amount to any positive allusion to these plays; but when considered with reference to the entire mass of evidence, which will be pro-

<sup>1</sup> *Works* (Boston), XIII. 188.

<sup>2</sup> *Proœmium*, Craik's *Bacon*, 614.



duced to prove the fact that he was the author of them, it must strike the mind of any reader with the force of a very pregnant suggestion, that he intended (in his own mind, at least,) to include them in the same category with the Essays as among those other unnamed particulars. The work of revising the Essays was continued, and the new and enlarged edition appeared, in 1625. If the Folio of 1623 were printed under his supervision, his part of the work must have been still in progress, if not entirely completed, at the date of this epistle to Bishop Andrews.

His poetical works were in the possession of the world as "Mr. William Shakespeare's Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies," and as "Shakespeare's Sonnets and Poems;" and so he would let them remain. They had had their trial already and stood out all appeals, and the wit that was in them could no more be hid than it could be lost. These "feigned histories or speaking pictures," which had for one object, perhaps, "to draw down to the sense" of the theatre and the popular mind things which "flew too high over men's heads" in general, in other forms of delivery, would effectually do their own proper work; and they might be left to take care of themselves. "And there we hope," says the Preface, "to your divers capacities, you will find enough, both to draw, and hold you." For him, not to be understood would be all the same as not to be known: "Read him, therefore, and again and again: And, if then, you do not like him, surely you are in some manifest danger not to understand him." It is certainly conceivable, that a mind like his should care but little for any lustre that might be added to his name, or his memory, by these writings; or, at least, that he should be willing to wait until it should shine forth with an illumination sufficiently brilliant and clear to reveal by its own light the soul and genius of himself. In the mean time, he would take care to keep "the memory of so worthy a Friend and Fellow alive," as this "our Shakespeare" had come to be. The following son-

net, perhaps, may represent the true state of his mind and feeling, near the close of his life : —

"Poor soul, the centre of my sinful earth,  
Fool'd by these rebel powers that thee array,  
Why dost thou pine within, and suffer dearth,  
Painting thy outward walls so costly gay?  
Why so large cost, having so short a lease,  
Dost thou upon thy fading mansion spend?  
Shall worms, inheritors of this excess,  
Eat up thy charge? Is this thy body's end?  
Then, soul, live thou upon thy servant's loss,  
And let that pine to aggravate thy store;  
Buy terms divine in selling hours of dross:  
Within be fed, without be rich no more,  
So shalt thou feed on death, that feeds on men,  
And death once dead, there's no more dying then."

*Sonnet cxlvi.*

#### § 6. BACON A POET.

Of course, if this theory be established, there will be no further question that Francis Bacon was a poet; but the business here will be to consider of the extraneous evidences of the fact, and also of those further proofs out of the writings themselves, more immediately connected with this part of the inquiry, which go to establish that fact. We have already seen in his personal history that he was, in the earlier part of his career, much in the habit of writing sonnets. Some of them were addressed to the Queen, some were written for Essex to be addressed to her in his name, and one, at least, was commended by great persons; for, as he writes in the Apology concerning Essex, "a little before that time, being about the middle of Michaelmas term [1599], her majesty had a purpose to dine at my lodge at Twickenham Park, at which time I had, though I profess not to be a poet, prepared a sonnet, directly tending and alluding to draw on her majesty's reconciliation to my lord; which, I remember, also, I showed to a great person and one of my lord's nearest

friends [Southampton?], who commended it."<sup>1</sup> In the letter of advice addressed by the Earl of Essex to Sir Fulke Greville on his studies, first printed by Mr. Spedding as written by Bacon, and palpably one of the numerous papers drafted by him for his patron's use, the Earl is made to say: "For poets, I can commend none, being resolved to be ever a stranger to them."<sup>2</sup> However this may have been intended to be seriously spoken in character by the Earl to the Knight (who was himself a poet), when considered with reference to the actual facts now known concerning them both, it may be taken as a pretty good joke. Nor need there be any wonder that his sonnets were commended by the great, when we know, by acknowledged specimens of his skill in the art, that he was capable of writing very excellent poetry. Upon a review of his poetical works, Mr. Spedding ventures to express the opinion, that "Bacon was not without the fine phrensy of the poet," and that, if it had taken the ordinary direction, "it would have carried him to a place among the great poets."<sup>3</sup>

His metrical versions of the Psalms of David, which were dedicated to his friend, the learned and pious poet, George Herbert, as "the best judge of Divinity and Poesy met," were the amusement of his idle hours, during a time of impaired health, in the spring of 1625, and within a year of his death. Certainly, nothing great, or very brilliant, should be looked for in these mere translations into verse. In idea and sentiment, he was absolutely limited to the original psalm: nor could he have much latitude in the expression; besides that large allowance must be made for the necessary difference between the young and "strong imagination" of

"The lunatic, the lover, and the poet,"

of the "Midsummer-Night's Dream" of the man of thirty-

<sup>1</sup> *Apology, Works* (Phila.), II. 336.

<sup>2</sup> *Letters and Life*, by Spedding, II. 25.

<sup>3</sup> *Works* (Boston), XIV. 113.



three, and the more compounded age and the lassitude of the sick old man of sixty-five. Nevertheless, in elegance, ease of rhythmic flow, and pathetic sweetness, in many passages, they are not unworthy of the master himself, and in the expression and use of words, there are many similitudes with Shakespeare, and some striking parallel passages may be found in them: as, for instance, this one from the translation of the XCth Psalm, —

"As a tale told, which sometimes men attend,  
And sometimes not, our life steals to an end : "

which may be compared with the following lines from the "King John" : —

"Life is as tedious as a twice-told tale,  
Vexing the dull ear of a drowsy man." — *Act III. Sc. 4.*

And again, in the same Psalm, we have these lines : —

"O Lord, thou art our home, to whom we fly,  
And so hast always been from age to age:  
Before the hills did intercept the eye,  
Or that the frame was up of earthly stage,  
One God thou wert, and art, and still shall be;  
The line of Time, it doth not measure thee.  
Both death and life obey thy holy lore,  
And visit in their turns, as they are sent;  
A thousand years with thee, they are no more  
Than yesterday, which, ere it is, is spent:  
Or as a watch by night, that course doth keep,  
And goes, and comes, unwares to them that sleep."<sup>1</sup>

And in the CIVth Psalm, we have this line : —

"The greater navies look like walking woods."

Now, compare this with the following lines from the "Macbeth" : —

"*Mess.* I look'd toward Birnam, and anon, methought,  
The wood began to move. . . .

"*Mac.* To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,  
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,  
To the last syllable of recorded time;  
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools  
The way to dusty death. — Out, out, brief candle!

<sup>1</sup> *Works* (Boston), XIV. 125

Life's but a walking shadow; a poor player,  
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,  
And then is heard no more: it is a tale  
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,  
Signifying nothing." — *Act V. Sc. 5.*

It has scarcely ever been doubted, among critics, that the sonnets, smaller poems, and plays were the work of one and the same author; though many have experienced insurmountable difficulties in the attempt to reconcile the sonnets with the life of the man, William Shakespeare. The similitudes of thought, style, and diction, are such as to put at rest all question on that head. Mr. Boswell doubted whether any true intimations could be drawn from the Sonnets of Shakespeare, respecting the life and feelings of the author: certainly no such doubt could have arisen in his mind, if he had considered them as the work of Francis Bacon. In respect of ideas, opinions, modes of thinking and feeling, style, manner, and language, they bear the impress of Bacon's mind, especially in the first half of his life; and they exhibit states of mind and feeling, which will find an explanation nowhere better than in his personal history. Many of them show the strongest internal evidence of their having been addressed to the Queen, as they no doubt were. Bacon tells us, that "she was very willing to be courted, wooed, and to have sonnets made in her commendation";<sup>1</sup> and, as we know, he was himself notoriously given to the writing of sonnets to this "mistress' eyebrow." Some of them may have been addressed to his young friend, Mr. William Herbert (Earl of Pembroke), and others may find a fitting interpretation in the circumstances and events of his own actual life, in his own inward thought and feeling, and in his own enterprises of love, which continued to a late day, though this Petrarch worshipped no particular Laura. The first small collection of sonnets and minor poems was published by Jaggard, in 1599, under the title of the "Passionate Pilgrim," but the full edition of the

<sup>1</sup> In *Mem. Eliz.*, Works (Mont.), III. 477.

Sonnets was dedicated to "Mr. W. H." in 1609, when Shakespeare was in his forty-sixth, and Bacon in the forty-ninth year of his age. Even the difficulty of Mr. Boswell, however, that a man of forty-five should write such sonnets as the LXXIIId, may disappear, when it is considered that Bacon was married in his forty-sixth year, and that even in 1609, when so nearly fifty, thoughts of love and "yellow leaves" may very well have come together.

In 1594, the Solicitor's place having become vacant, Bacon's suit for it was urgently pressed by Essex and others of his friends. Without preferment at the age of thirty-three, and still hesitating whether he should not devote himself wholly to studies and a private life, he felt this to be an important crisis in his fortunes; nearly all his hopes looking to a public career were staked upon it. The Queen had been personally well-disposed towards him, but she had conceived a high displeasure at his course in Parliament on the subsidies, and he was now excluded from her presence; and the zeal of Essex in his behalf, insisting upon it as a special favor to himself, and as perhaps affording some countenance to his party, seems still further to have marred the whole business. She was determined not to yield her own will to the pride of Essex, and hesitated, perhaps, to raise to so high a place in the state the known adherent and friend of the great earl, who, although the grandson of her cousin, and a favorite thus far, was yet a descendant in the line of Edward III., whose ambitious head was capable of projects looking to her very throne. So, at last, when he had been "voiced with great expectation," and had had "the honorable testimony of so many counsellors," and "the wishes of most men" even for the higher place of Attorney-General, the Queen "did fly the tilt," says Essex, and it was fixed, that Serjeant Fleming should be made Solicitor; and, as we learn from himself, "no man ever read a more exquisite disgrace" than Francis Bacon. No longer "able to endure the sun," he "fled into the shade" at Twicken-



ham Park, the lovely country-seat of his brother Edward, on the banks of the Thames, where he kept his "lodge," his papers, and his books, and whither he was accustomed to retire whenever he could escape from Gray's Inn, and the bustle of the city, or desired to find the most favored retreat of the Muses. He had resolved thus, if rejected: "I will by God's assistance, with this disgrace of my fortune, and yet with the comfort of the good opinion of so many honorable and worthy persons, retire myself with a couple of men to Cambridge, and there spend my life in studies and contemplations, without looking back."<sup>1</sup>

Something like this same *voicing* appears in the "Hamlet," thus:—

*Ros.* Good my Lord, what is your cause of distemper? You do, surely, bar the door of your liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend.

*Ham.* Sir, I lack advancement.

*Ros.* How can that be, when you have the voice of the King himself for your succession in Denmark?

*Ham.* Ay, sir, but 'while the grass grows,'—the proverb is something musty."—*Act III. Sc. 2.*

Again, says the "Timon":—

"Is this the Athenian minion whom the world  
Voiced so regardfully?"—*Act IV. Sc. 3.*

The "Hamlet" continues:—

*King.* How fares our cousin Hamlet?

*Ham.* Excellent, i' faith; of the chameleon's dish: I eat the air, promise-cramm'd. You cannot feed capons so."—*Act III. Sc. 2.*

So, says Bacon, of the chameleon: "He feedeth not only upon air, (though that be his principal sustenance.) yet some that have kept chameleons a whole year together, would never perceive that ever they fed upon anything else but air";<sup>2</sup> and this idea of the chameleon's *feeding* on air is found in the "Two Gentlemen of Verona," thus:—

*Sic.* What, angry, Sir Thurio? do you change colour?

*Val.* Give me leave, madam; he is a kind of chameleon.

<sup>1</sup> Letter, *Works* (Mont.), XII. 170; Spedding, I. 291

<sup>2</sup> *Nat. Hist.* § 360.

*Thur.* That hath more mind to feed on your blood, than live in your air." — *Act II. Sc. 4.*

The "Hamlet" continues:—

"*Ham.* My lord, you play'd once in the University, you say?

[*To* POLONIUS.

*Pol.* That I did, my lord; and was accounted a good actor.

*Ham.* And what did you enact?

*Pol.* I did enact Julius Cæsar: I was kill'd i' the Capitol; Brutus kill'd me." — *Act III. Sc. 2.*

And there is something like the sound of a reminiscence in this expression of Bacon: "Nay, even two or three days ago, Bernardinus Telesius mounted the stage, and enacted a new play."<sup>1</sup>

Further, when Hamlet had instructed the players how to speak the speech of some dozen or sixteen lines, which he would set down and insert in the play, and the speech had taken effect, according to his expectation, the first remark that pops into his head is this very curious one:—

"Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers, (if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk with me,) with two Provincial roses on my raz'd shoes, get me a fellowship in a cry of players, sir?" — *Hamlet, Act III. Sc. 2.*

Is it, then, so very wonderful, that these ideas of the University and a couple of men, and a fellowship with two Provincial roses in his shoes, and a forest of feathers, should be running in the same head, at times not far apart? When Buckingham is about to fleece him of his "forest" at Gorhambury, he replies, "I will not be stripped of my feathers."

In the mean time, the usual tenor of his thoughts had been seriously interrupted, and his whole heart saddened. Deep in debt and Jews' bonds, with his prospect for promotion thus fatally darkened, he was on the point of giving up in despair: even his studies failed to afford relief. It seemed to him, that "the old anthem might never be more truly sung: *Totus mundus in maligno positus est*";<sup>2</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> *Ind. of Nat. Works* (Mont.), XV. 100.

<sup>2</sup> Letter.

again he writes: "But casting the worst of my fortune with an honorable friend that had long used me privately, I told his Lordship of this my purpose to travel, accompanying it with these very words, that upon her Majesty's rejecting me with such circumstance, though my heart might be good, yet mine eyes would be sore that I should take no pleasure to look upon my friends; for that I was not an impudent man, that could face out a disgrace; and yet I hoped her Majesty would not be offended, if not being able to endure the sun, I fled into the shade."<sup>1</sup> And thus sings the sonnet:—

"When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,  
I all alone beweep my outcast state,  
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,  
And look upon myself and curse my fate,  
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,  
Featur'd like him, like him with friends possess'd,  
Desiring this man's art, and that man's scope,  
With what I most enjoy contented least."—*Sonnet xxix.*

After a short retirement at Essex's house, and within his own private lodge at Twickenham, where, as he says, he "once again enjoyed the blessings of contemplation in that sweet solitariness, which collecteth the mind, as shutting the eyes doth the sight," he began to see and acknowledge "the providence of God" towards him, and concluded that he had taken "duty too exactly" and not "according to the dregs of this age," finding it on the whole most wise and expedient to bear the yoke in his youth — "*tolerare jugum in juventute*";<sup>2</sup> so that at length being called to some service by the Queen, in which he was detained by sickness at Huntingdon, he writes to her Majesty thus: "This present arrest of mine by his Divine Majesty from your Majesty's service, is not the least affliction I have proved; and I hope your Majesty doth conceive, that nothing under mere impossibility could have detained me from earning so

<sup>1</sup> Letter to Cecil (1594-5). Spedding's *Let. and Life*, I. 350.

<sup>2</sup> Letter to the Queen; Spedding's *Let. and Life*, I. 304.



gracious a vail, as it pleased your Majesty to give me."<sup>1</sup> Again, from the same retreat on the Thames, he entreats her Majesty not to impute his "absence to any weakness of mind or unworthiness."<sup>2</sup> And much in the same spirit runs this sonnet:—

"Being your slave, what should I do but tend  
Upon the hours and times of your desire?  
I have no precious time at all to spend,  
Nor services to do, till you require.  
Nor dare I chide the world-without-end hour,  
Whilst I (my sovereign) watch the clock for you,  
Nor think the bitterness of absence sour,  
When you have bid your servant once adieu.  
Nor dare I question with my jealous thought  
Where you may be, or your affairs suppose,  
But, like a sad slave, stay and think of naught,  
Save where you are, how happy you make those.  
So true a fool is love, that in your Will,  
(Though you do anything) he thinks no ill." — *Sonnet lvii.*

And again, —

"I am to wait, though waiting so be hell,  
Nor blame your pleasure, be it ill or well." — *Sonnet lviii.*

His comfort was, however, that he knew (as he had written to Essex) that her Majesty took "delight and contentment in executing this disgrace upon him"; nor did he think that "after a quintessence of wormwood" her Majesty would take "so large a draft of poppy" as to pass "many summers without all feeling of his sufferings";<sup>3</sup> —

"*Ham.* [*Aside.*] Wormwood, wormwood. . . .

And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust?" — *Act II. Sc. 2.*

as when the king in the play threatened to let loose upon Bertram his revenge and hate, —

"Without all terms of pity." — *All's Well, Act II. Sc. 3.*

And again the sonnet sings: —

"What potions have I drunk of siren tears,  
Distill'd from limbecks foul as hell within,

<sup>1</sup> Letter, July 20, 1594; *Works* (Mont.), XIII. 81.

<sup>2</sup> Letter to the Queen; *Works* (Mont.), XII. 170.

<sup>3</sup> Letter; *Works* (Mont.), XII. 167.

Applying fears to hopes, and hopes to fears,  
Still losing when I saw myself to win?" — *Sonnet cxix.*

And thus, again : —

"O for my sake do you with fortune chide,  
The guilty goddess of my harmful deeds,  
That did not better for my life provide,  
Than public means, which public manners breeds.  
Thence comes it that my name receives a brand,  
And almost thence my nature is subdued  
To what it works in, like the dyer's hand.  
Pity me, then, and wish I were renew'd,  
Whilst, like a willing patient, I will drink  
Potions of eysell, 'gainst my strong infection.  
No bitterness that I will bitter think,  
Nor double penance to correct correction." — *Sonnet cxl.*

"Your love and pity doth the impression fill,  
Which vulgar scandal stamp'd upon my brow." — *Sonnet cxli.*

"I told her," writes Essex to Bacon, (26th March, 1594,) "how much you were thrown down with the correction she had already given you."

About this time (1595), we find him writing again :  
"For to be as I told you, like a child following a bird,  
which, when he is nearest, flieth away and lighteth a little  
before, and then the child after it again, and so in infini-  
tum ; I am weary of it." <sup>1</sup> So moaned the "tired seasick  
suitor," as he describes himself in another letter ; <sup>2</sup> and very  
like, again, is the tone of the sonnet, —

"Tir'd with all these, for restful death I cry, —  
As to behold desert a beggar born,  
And needy nothing trim'd in jollity,  
And purest faith unhappily forsworn,  
And gilded honour shamefully misplaced,  
And maiden virtue rudely strumpeted,  
And right perfection wrongfully disgrac'd,  
And strength by limping sway disabled,  
And art made tongue-tied by authority,

<sup>1</sup> Letter to Greville, *Works* (Mont.), XII. 161; *Letters and Life*, Spedding,  
339.

<sup>2</sup> Letter to Burghley (21 March, 1594-5), (Mont.), XII. 475; *Spedding*,  
361.

And folly (doctor-like) controlling skill,  
 And simple truth miscall'd simplicity,  
 And captive Good attending captain Ill.  
 Tir'd with all these, from these would I be gone,  
 Save that, to die, I leave my love alone." — *Sonnet lxxvi.*

And the same expression creeps into the "Richard II.," written soon afterwards, thus : —

"Patience is stale, and I am weary of it." — *Act V. Sc. 5.*

But lest an unfavorable impression should get abroad, and even become fixed in her Majesty's mind, on account of his unwonted absence from court, in these years, he writes again an express letter to the Lord Keeper, dated May 25th, 1595, from his retreat at Twickenham Park, desiring his Lordship to explain matters in that quarter, which runs thus : —

"I thought good to step aside for nine days, which is the durance of a wonder, and not for any dislike in the world; for I think her Majesty hath done me as great a favour in making an end of this matter, as if she had enlarged me from some restraint. And I humbly pray your Lordship, if it so please you, to deliver to her Majesty from me, that I would have been glad to have done her Majesty service now in the best of my years, and the same mind remains in me still; and that it may be, when her Majesty hath tried others, she will think of him that she hath cast aside. For I will take it upon that which her Majesty hath often said, that she doth reserve me, and not reject me."<sup>1</sup>

Which same wonder will appear again in the play, thus : —

*Glos.* That would be ten days' wonder, at the least.

*Clar.* That's a day longer than a wonder lasts.

*Glos.* By so much is the wonder in extremes."

*3 Hen. VI., Act III. Sc. 2.*

And again, thus, in the "As You Like It" : —

"*Ros.* I was seven of the nine days out of the wonder before you came." — *Act. III. Sc. 2.*

<sup>1</sup> *Letter, Works (Mont.), XIII. 53; Spedd. I. 360.*



By November following, this great grief is forgotten, and we find him returned to his better moods, and assisting Essex in getting up a magnificent display, at his own house, for her Majesty's entertainment on the anniversary of her accession. Bacon puts in requisition all the powers of the Muses, and writes a Masque to be exhibited before her. Fleming had received his commission as Solicitor, on the 5th of this month, and twelve days afterwards, the Queen had granted to Bacon, under the Privy Seal, in addition to the princely gifts he had previously received at her hands, the reversion of the lease of Twickenham Park itself, delightfully situated on the banks of the Thames, within sight of her Majesty's palace of Whitehall, with an agreeable mansion, park, and garden, and a goodly expanse of lawn and pasture, lake and orchard, mead and field,—"a home for a prince," says Mr. Dixon.<sup>1</sup> And hither her Majesty comes in person, upon occasion, to dine with her courtly admirer, and have a spice of his wit, in his own Arcadian lodge.

The speeches that were written for this Masque, as any one may see, are conceived in his own best manner and decidedly in the Shakespearean vein. This specimen from the Hermit's speech in the presence will show his conception of "the sweet travelling through universal variety," which will demand our particular attention:—

"For I wish him to leave turning over the book of fortune, which is but a play for children, when there be so many books of truth and knowledge better worthy the revolving, and not fix his view only upon a picture in a little table, where there be so many tables of histories, yea to the life, excellent to behold and admire. Whether he believe me or no, there is no prison to the thoughts, which are free under the greatest tyrants. Shall any man make his conceit as an anchor, mured up within the compass of one beauty or person, that may have the liberty of all

<sup>1</sup> *Pera. Hist.*, 79, 108.

contemplation? Shall he exchange the sweet travelling through the universal variety for one wearisome and endless round or labyrinth? Let thy master, Squire, offer his service to the Muses. It is long since they received any into their court. They give alms continually at their gate, that many come to live upon; but few they have ever admitted into their palace. There shall he find secrets not dangerous to know, sides and parties not factious to hold, precepts and commandments not penal to disobey. The gardens of love wherein he now playeth himself are fresh to-day and fading to-morrow, as the sun comforts them or is turned from them. But the gardens of the Muses keep the privilege of the golden age; they ever flourish and are in league with time. The monuments of wit survive the monuments of power: the verses of the poet endure without a syllable lost, while states and empires pass many periods. Let him not think he shall descend, for he is now upon a hill as a ship is mounted upon the ridge of a wave; but that hill of the Muses is above tempests, always clear and calm; a hill of the goodliest discovery that man can have, being a prospect upon all the errors and wanderings of the present and former times. Yea, in some cliff it leadeth the eye beyond the horizon of time, and giveth no obscure divination of times to come. So that if he will indeed lead *vitam vitalem*, a life that unites safety and dignity, pleasure and merit; if he will win admiration without envy; if he will be in the feast and not in the throng; in the light and not in the heat; let him embrace the life of study and contemplation. And if he will accept of no other reason, yet because the gift of the Muses will enworthy him in his love, and where he now looks on his mistress' outside with the eyes of sense, which are dazzled and amazed, he shall then behold her high perfections and heavenly mind with the eyes of judgment, which grow stronger by more nearly and more directly viewing such an object."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Masque, Works* (Philad.), II. 533; *Letters and Life*, by Spedding, I. 379

Watching closely, we shall discover traces of this same cliff and hill of the Muses, in several places, in both these writings. Indeed there are many considerations which favor the supposition, that Bacon was privately devoted to the Muses. The cast of his genius was poetical. His prose writings almost everywhere exhibit the highest qualities of the poet, — a philosophic depth of insight, a luminous and powerful imagination, a bold and brilliant grasp of metaphor, a crystalline clearness, brevity, and beauty of expression, and such sovereignty in all the realms of thought and knowledge, and such command of language, as made all nature and the entire compass of the English tongue (which he enlarged from the Latin) tributary to his purposes; and this is precisely what has always been recognized as one of the wonders of Shakespeare. From the very beginning of his career, he had taken all knowledge to be his province, and he had explored nearly every department of it that was open to him in his day. He had, moreover, attained to very correct ideas of the nature, objects, and uses of poetry: perhaps no man ever had better.

In his Description of the Intellectual Globe, he says, "We adopt that division of human learning, which is correlative to the three faculties of the intellect. We therefore set down its parts as three: History, Poesy, and Philosophy: — history has reference to memory; poesy to imagination; philosophy to reason. By poesy, in this place, we mean nothing else than feigned history."<sup>1</sup> In the Advancement, he makes three divisions of Poesy: Narrative, Representative, and Allusive. The Narrative is "a mere imitation of history, with the excesses before remembered; choosing for subject commonly wars and love, rarely state, and sometimes pleasure or mirth." The Allusive, or parabolical, applied to some special purpose or conceit, "was much more in use in ancient times, as by the fables of Æsop, and the brief sentences of the Seven, and the

<sup>1</sup> *Works* (Mont.), XII. 150.



use of hieroglyphics may appear." But the Representative "is as a visible history; and is an image of actions as if they were present, as history is of actions in nature as they are, that is past;"<sup>1</sup> and it is under this head, of course, that we may infer he would bring dramatic poetry: in the *De Augmentis*, he expressly designates the three kinds as "*aut Narrativa, aut Dramatica, aut Parabolica.*"<sup>2</sup>

"Mr. William Shakespeare's Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies" are precisely such feigned histories, representative visible histories, or speaking pictures, as are here supposed. Bacon's philosophical, political, and legal writings, were his labors: the Essays and certain "other unnamed particulars of that kind" (in which we may include his tributes to the Muses), were the recreations of his other studies; for, says he, "all science is the labor and handicraft of the mind: poetry can only be considered its recreation."<sup>3</sup> Of poesy in general, he says, "it is a part of learning in measure of words for the most part restrained, but in all other points extremely licensed, and doth truly refer to the imagination; which, being not tied to the laws of matter, may at pleasure join that which nature hath severed, and sever that which nature hath joined, and so make unlawful matches and divorces of things: *Pictoribus atque poetis, &c.*" So, we remember, —

"The lunatic, the lover, and the poet,  
Are of imagination all compact."

In respect of words, again, it is but "one of the arts of speech," but in respect of matter, "it is one of the principal portions of learning, and is nothing else but feigned history, which may be styled as well in prose as in verse. The use of this feigned history hath been to give some shadow of satisfaction to the mind of man in those points wherein the nature of things doth deny it, the world being in proportion

<sup>1</sup> *Adv. of Learn.*, Book II.

<sup>2</sup> *Lib. II. c. 13.*

<sup>3</sup> *Int. Globe, Works* (Mont.), XV. 180.

inferior to the soul ; by reason whereof there is, agreeable to the spirit of man, a more ample greatness, a more exact goodness, and a more absolute variety, than can be found in the nature of things. Therefore, because the acts or events of true history have not that magnitude which satisfieth the mind of man, poesy feigneth acts and events greater and more heroical : because true history propoundeth the successes and issues of actions not so agreeable to the merits of virtue and vice, therefore poesy feigns them more just in retribution, and more according to revealed providence : because true history representeth actions and events more ordinary, and less interchanged, therefore poesy endueth them with more rareness, and more unexpected and alternative variations : so as it appeareth that poesy serveth and conferreth to magnanimity, morality, and delectation. And therefore it was ever thought to have some participation of divineness, because it doth raise and erect the mind, by submitting the shows of things to the desires of the mind ; whereas reason doth buckle and bow the mind unto the nature of things. And we see, that by these insinuations and congruities with man's nature and pleasure, joined also with the agreement and consort it hath with music, it hath had access and estimation in rude times and barbarous regions, where other learning stood excluded." <sup>1</sup>

Surely, this is such an account of the true nature, scope, and use of poetry, as might be expected to come from the author of those illustrative and imperishable examples of these very doctrines, the plays of Shakespeare. The excellent critical judgment of Professor Gervinus did not fail to discover, that "Shakespeare appears to have entertained the same views with Lord Bacon." <sup>2</sup> Delia Bacon made the same discovery. In fact, these plays constitute a new and altogether superior kind of dramatic writing. "They are," says Coleridge, "in the ancient sense, neither tragedies, nor comedies, nor both in one, but a different *genus*,

<sup>1</sup> *Adv. of Learn.*, Book II.

<sup>2</sup> *Shakes. Com.*, II. 549.

diverse in kind, and not merely different in degree. They may be called romantic dramas, or dramatic romances." <sup>1</sup> We may as well call them, at once, representative visible histories, or speaking pictures, illustrative examples, or types and models of the whole process of the mind and the continuous frame and order of discovery in particular subjects, the most dignified, selected for their variety and importance, after the manner of Francis Bacon, and in the most consummate style of the art which mends nature. Verily, this critical exposition by Bacon himself would seem to furnish an explicit and satisfactory interpretation of his own actual meaning (first propounded by Delia Bacon), when he speaks, in the introduction to the Fourth Part of the Great Instauration, of those "illustrative examples" and "actual types and models" in immediate connection with the subject of that "true art" which "is always capable of advancing."

He also understood that further use of poetry allusive or parabolical, one object of which was, "to retire and obscure," as well as "to demonstrate and illustrate," what is "to be taught or delivered;" that is, "when the secrets and mysteries of religion, policy, or philosophy, are involved in fables or parables." This use of poetry is certainly not without ample illustration in the greater plays of Shakespeare. Some of them teach things never dreamed of in the ordinary philosophy, much less in any that can well be ascribed to William Shakespeare, or any man that ever lived with a personal history like his; not to speak of the many lesser heresies, Arian or other, for which sundry Bartholomew Legates were burned at a stake, in those days, and, for the like of which, in plain prose, the Royal Thunderer would hurl his fulminations against Vorstius, even across the English Channel. No man knew better than Bacon how few persons in his own age, or perhaps in almost any other, would be found capable of appreciating, or even understanding at all, the

<sup>1</sup> *Progress of the Drama*, Works of Coleridge, IV. 36.



*Novum Organum* and his deeper philosophical works. The secrets contained in these were sufficiently obscured from the vulgar by the very character of the writings themselves. But he was also, not only fully aware of the great value of the poetical form of delivery, but able to make good and effectual use of it, for the purpose of withdrawing opinions, doctrines, secrets, and mysteries from the reach of vulgar censure and public persecution, while yet communicating them with sufficient clearness to the initiated, who might have an eye to see, and, at the same time, with a certain prophetic indistinctness and general effect, to the common mind of the theatre, which might thereby be instructed, until, at length, it should find its old errors and superstitions undermined, without knowing that they had been attacked; somewhat in the same manner as Euripides and other ancient poets, and even Dante, Milton, and Goethe, among the moderns, assailed the superstitious mythology and erroneous popular notions of the ages in which they lived. Indeed, we learn from himself, that "born in an age when religion was in no very prosperous state," he had endeavored to rise to civil dignities, for one thing, in order that, by the exercise of his genius, he might the better "effect something which would be profitable for the salvation of souls." He dreaded "no incursions of barbarians" in his time, but he foresaw that "civil wars" were about to arise, involving many countries, and "that from the malignity of religious sects, and from those compendious systems of artifice and caution" which had "crept into the place of erudition," no less "a tempest" was impending "over literature and science."<sup>1</sup>

He kept this general purpose in view in all his writings. Speaking of the Great Instauration, he says, "yet, nevertheless, I have just cause to doubt, that it flies too high over men's heads; have a purpose therefore, though I break the order of time, to draw it down to the sense, by some pat

<sup>1</sup> Proœmium: *Craik's Bacon*, 612-13.

terns of a Natural Story or Inquisition."<sup>1</sup> Towards the close of his life, was written the "New Atlantis" (published after his death), which was doubtless one of those patterns of a natural story, or feigned history, "devised," says Dr. Rawley, "to the end that he might exhibit therein a model or description of a College, instituted for the interpreting of nature, and the producing of great and marvellous works for the benefit of men, under the name of Solomon's House, or College of the Six Day's Works."<sup>2</sup> This was one kind; but there may very well have been another class of patterns or models, and the order of time may have been broken, in respect of these, long before. Indeed, we are expressly told, in the introduction to the *Novum Organum*, that the Fourth Part of his great work was to have for its very object and intent to exhibit "some examples" of his method as applied to "the most dignified subjects" of inquiry; "we mean," says he, "actual types and models, calculated to place, as it were, before our eyes, the whole process of the mind and the continuous frame and order of discovery in particular subjects, selected for their variety and importance." It is certain that this Fourth Part never appeared as such: it lay under subjection, perhaps, to a fate as inexorable as that Sixth Part itself, which, as he tells us, could not even be undertaken, in his day, though he hoped to be able to make a "no contemptible beginning"; but which would have for its object, not only "contemplative enjoyment," but "the common affairs and fortune of mankind, and a complete power of action," and for its end, to raise, at last, upon those preliminary "foundations" which could then be instituted and established, and finally to complete, the superstructure of "Philosophy itself."<sup>3</sup>

Nor is it necessary to suppose, that these plays were actually intended to constitute that contemplated Fourth Part, or that they were written with that immediate view;

<sup>1</sup> Ded. Epist. to Bishop Andrews.

<sup>2</sup> Pref. to *New Atlantis*.

<sup>3</sup> Intro. to *Nov. Org.*

but that they were written upon the same philosophical theory, and with the same general purpose in view, and that they might finally have been considered as answering very well as a fitting substitute for one part of it, or that they may now be taken as illustrating the general scope, purpose, and intent of that Fourth Part, can scarcely be doubted. Certainly, it must be admitted, that they answer the purpose admirably well. It could not have been any systematic treatise of psychology that was intended: such a treatise would rather belong to the Sixth Part, the *Philosophia Prima* come full circle, or Philosophy itself. It is altogether more probable, that these "illustrative examples" or "types and models" were to participate in that "sweet travelling through universal variety," of which we have a hint in the Hermit's Speech in the Masque.

In another Masque, that which was performed at the Christmas Revels of Gray's Inn, in 1594, and in which he foreshadows something of the general scope of his philosophical schemes, and prefigures our modern scientific libraries, museums, laboratories, and zoölogical and botanical gardens, he gives us this hint of his conception of a model:—

"Next, a spacious, wonderful garden, wherein whatsoever plant the sun of divers climates, out of the earth of divers moulds, either wild or by the culture of man brought forth, may be with that care that appertaineth to the good prospering thereof set and cherished. This garden to be built about with rooms to stable in all rare beasts and to cage in all rare birds; with two lakes adjoining, the one of fresh water, the other of salt, for like variety of fishes. And so you may have in small compass a model of universal nature made private."<sup>1</sup> These models were to have a wide range and compass in their application to particular subjects, which were by no means to be confined to physical science merely, but were to comprehend universal nature and all

<sup>1</sup> Masque; *Letters and Life* by Spedding, I. 335.



philosophy. "And for myself," he says again, "I am not raising a capitol or pyramid to the pride of man, but laying a foundation in the human understanding for a holy temple after the model of the world":<sup>1</sup> yet, he continues, again, "may God never permit us to give out the dream of our fancy as a model of the world."<sup>2</sup> And, in the play of Richard II., written a year or two after these Masques, we have from himself (perhaps), in the garden scene, an exemplification of his idea of a model as applied to the state and civil affairs, in these lines:—

"1 *Servt.* Why should we, in the compass of a pale,  
Keep law and form, and due proportion,  
Shewing, as in a model, our firm estate,  
When our sea-wall'd garden, the whole land,  
Is full of weeds?" — *Act III. Sc. 4.*

And again, thus:—

"O England! model to thy inward greatness,  
Like little body with a mighty heart,  
What might'st thou do, that honour would thee do,  
Were all thy children kind and natural!"

*Henry V., Act II., Chor.*

In short, the foundations were to be laid, not of physical science only, but of metaphysical science also. We were to have "a scaling-ladder of the intellect," which, pursuing "the thread of the labyrinth," should disclose "the several degrees of ascent," whereby only it was possible for men to climb up to the top of "the magnificent temple, palace, city, and hill" of the great man of the New Atlantis, who wore an aspect "as if he pitied men," as it had been a "*Scala Cœli*" or "ladder to all high designs,"<sup>3</sup>—that hill of the Muses, "above tempests, always clear and calm; a hill of the goodliest discovery that man can have, being a prospect upon all the errors and wanderings of the present and former

<sup>1</sup> *Trans. of the Nov. Org. by Spedding, Works (Boston), VIII. 151.*

<sup>2</sup> *Introduct. to Nov. Org.*

<sup>3</sup> *Troilus and Cressida.*

times:— yea, in some cliff it leadeth the eye beyond the horizon of time, and giveth no obscure divination of times to come: " <sup>1</sup> —

"*Glos.* There is a cliff, whose high and bending head  
Looks fearfully in the confined deep:  
Bring me but to the very brim of it,  
And I'll repair the misery thou dost bear,  
With something rich about me: from that place  
I shall no leading need:" — *Lear, Act IV. Sc. 1.*

that same "high and pleasant hill" of the "Timon" that was "conceiv'd to scope":—

"This throne, this Fortune, and this hill, methinks,  
With one man beckon'd from the rest below,  
Bowing his head against the steepy mount  
To climb his happiness, would be well express'd  
In our condition:" — *Timon, Act I. Sc. 1.*

and once arrived at the "mountain tops" and "uppermost elevations of nature," <sup>2</sup> whence might be had some true glimpse of "the top of judgment" <sup>3</sup> and "spring-head" <sup>4</sup> of all science, we might then begin to comprehend "Philosophy itself:"—

"*Glos.* When shall we come to the top of that same hill?"  
*Lear, Act IV. Sc. 6.*

In the earlier part of his life, he found it safer and better, and perhaps more in accordance with the bent of his genius, to stand upon the hill of the Muses, where he could avail himself of his representative visible histories, speaking pictures, types and models, fables and parables, to demonstrate and illustrate, or retire and obscure, the secrets and mysteries of religion, policy, or philosophy, after the manner of all ancient poetry, heathen or sacred, and in a style and form and essence that should equal, if not surpass it altogether.

But in the later part of his life, when he had mounted

<sup>1</sup> *Essex's Masque.*

<sup>3</sup> *Measure for Measure.*

<sup>2</sup> *Scaling-Ladder.*

<sup>4</sup> *Adv. of Learn.*

to the height of power in the state, and become the keeper of the King's conscience and his seals, when his faculties had become more "compounded," and "stiff with age," yet with matured power and vigor of intellect, he would more boldly enter "the judicial palace of the mind," and would venture, by the help of "new found methods and compounds strange"<sup>1</sup> to complete, and by the help of princely dedications to promulgate, a systematic renovation and instauration of science and philosophy; for, as he himself says, this poesy, "being as a plant that cometh of the lust of the earth, without a formal seed, it hath sprung up and spread abroad more than any other kind [of learning]: but to ascribe unto it that which is due, for the expressing of affections, passions, corruptions, and customs, we are beholden to poets more than to the philosopher's works; and for wit and eloquence, not much less than to orators' harangues. But it is not good to stay too long in the theatre. Let us now pass to the judicial place or palace of the mind, which we are to approach and view with more reverence and attention":—<sup>2</sup>

"Pry'thee, speak:

Falseness cannot come from thee; for thou look'st

Modest as Justice, and thou seem'st a palace

For the crown'd Truth to dwell in."—*Per., Act V. Sc. 1.*

For, as we remember, the Muses "give alms continually at their gate; but few they have ever admitted into their palace."

And in 1623, he opens the third book of the *De Augmentis* (taking the elegant and very literal version of Wats) thus:—

"All History, excellent King, treads upon the earth, and performs the office of a guide rather than of a light; and Poesy is, as it were, the dream of Knowledge; a sweet pleasing thing, full of variations, and would be thought to somewhat inspired with divine rapture; which dreams



likewise present. But it is time for me to awake, and to raise myself from the earth, cutting the liquid air of Philosophy and Sciences."<sup>1</sup> And the poet in the "Timon" expresses himself much in the same way : —

" My free drift  
Halts not particularly, but moves itself  
In a wide sea of wax : no levell'd mallice  
Infects one comma in the course I hold,  
But flies an eagle flight, bold, and forth on,  
Leaving no tract behind." — *Act I. Sc. 1.*

But here, it was "*fastigia scilicet rerum tantummodo tractans*."<sup>2</sup> And before finally taking leave of the stage, he adds, in the *De Augmentis*, the following very remarkable passage to what he had before said in the Advancement on this subject, viz. : —

" Dramatic poesy, which takes the theatre for the world, is of excellent use, if it be sane. For the discipline as well as the corruption of the theatre may be very great. And in mischiefs of this kind it abounds : the discipline is plainly neglected in our times. Although in modern states, play-acting is esteemed but as a ludicrous thing, except when it is too satirical and biting ; yet among the ancients, it became a means of forming the souls of men to virtue. Even the wise and prudent, and great philosophers, considered it to be, as it were, the *plectrum* of the mind. And most certainly, what is one of the secrets of nature, the minds of men, when assembled together, are more open to affections and impressions than when they are alone."<sup>3</sup>

#### § 7. GESTA GRAYORUM.

In December, 1594, less than a year before this *Masque* was written for Essex, Bacon had taken a principal part in the preparations for the Christmas Revels at Gray's Inn,

<sup>1</sup> *De Aug.*, (Craig's *Bacon*, 235).

<sup>2</sup> *De Aug. Scient.*, Lib. III. c. 1.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* II. c. 12.

which were celebrated with especial splendor in that year. A contemporary account of these Revels, drawn up by some unknown author, and entitled "*Gesta Grayorum*" (first printed in 1688), has been preserved also in Nichols' "*Progresses of Queen Elizabeth*," and it is cited by Mr. Spedding as worthy of credit;<sup>1</sup> from which it appears that Francis Bacon was particularly active and zealous in his efforts to entertain the Queen and her courtiers as well as to sustain the ancient renown of that worshipful society in the field of wit and learned sports. "A still more sumptuous masque was intended," thinks Nichols,<sup>2</sup> "if we may judge from the following letter from the great Bacon," which (according to Spedding) was found in the Lansdown collection of Lord Burghley's papers, and was most probably addressed to him, though on what precise occasion it is not certainly ascertained. It reads thus:—

"It may please your good Lordship,—I am sorry the joint Masque from the Four Inns of Court faileth; wherein I conceive there is no other ground of that event but impossibility. Nevertheless, because it falleth out that at this time Gray's Inn is well furnished of gallant young gentlemen, your Lordship may be pleased to know, that rather than this occasion shall pass without some demonstration of affection from the Inns of Court, there are a dozen gentlemen of Gray's Inn, that, out of the honour which they bear to your Lordship and my Lord Chamberlain, to whom at their last Masque, they were so much bounden, will be ready to furnish a Masque; wishing it were in their power to perform it according to their mind, and so for the present I humbly take my leave, resting your Lordship's very humble and much bounden

"FR. BACON."

The letter is without date or address. Nichols connects it with the masque of 1594. Spedding thinks it might

<sup>1</sup> Nichols' *Prog. Q. Eliz.* (London, 1823), III. 262; *Letters and Life of Bacon*, by Spedding, I. 325-342, (London, 1861).

<sup>2</sup> *Prog. Q. Eliz.* I. p. xx; Spedd. *Letters and Life*, II. 370.

possibly be referred to the year 1596, when Bacon wrote to the Earl of Shrewsbury from Gray's Inn "to borrow a horse and armour" for some public show. Collier supposes it to have been addressed to Lord Burghley, not long after 1588. He finds that, during the Christmas Revels at Gray's Inn in 1587, a comedy, in which Catiline and the "Dominus de Purpoole" were leading characters, was exhibited by the Gentlemen of Gray's Inn, at their Hall, before Lord Burghley and other courtiers, on the 16th of January (1587-8) and that, on the 28th of February following, a tragedy of the "Misfortunes of Arthur" and certain "dumb-shews" in which "Mr. Francis Bacon" assisted, were presented before the Queen at Greenwich by the Gentlemen of this same Inn;<sup>1</sup> and he assigns this letter to some subsequent occasion; but neither he, nor Mr. Spedding, gives any data on which it can safely be referred to any other time than that supposed by Nichols. However this may be, it is certain that besides this tragedy of Arthur and "certain Devices and Shewes" by the Gentlemen of Gray's Inn, seven plays also were performed before the Queen by the Children of Paul's and "her Majesty's Servants" of the theatre, during these Revels at Greenwich; and the "dumb-shews and additional speeches were partly devised by William Fulbeck, Francis Flower, Christopher Yelverton, Francis Bacon, John Lancaster, and others, who with Master Penroodock and Lancaster directed these proceedings at Court."<sup>2</sup> Here is incontestable proof that Francis Bacon was earnestly engaged in these dramatic entertainments in the same year in which William Shakespeare is supposed to have arrived in London to join the Blackfriars Company as an humble "servitor," as yet wholly unknown to fame as an actor or as an author, but (as some would have us believe) bringing with him pockets full of plays and poems already written. Mr. Knight presumes he

<sup>1</sup> Collier's *Hist. Dram. Poetry*, I. 266-8; (London, 1831).

<sup>2</sup> Knight's *Biog. of Shakes.*, 326-7; (London, 1843).



played his part, perhaps furnished plays, for these very Revels; and he indulges in some highly poetic speculations upon this first meeting of the philosopher and the poet, but imagines that the high position of the courtier, Francis Bacon, would forbid him having any acquaintance with the humble actor, though as yet Bacon had no reputation as a philosopher, and Shakespeare none as a poet.

We need not wonder at this letter, whether it belong to this time or to some other, nor that upon this occasion, nevertheless, a magnificent Masque and other superb entertainments were easily forthcoming. Gray's Inn was turned into the court and kingdom of "Henry Prince of Purpoole," with all needful officers of State, not forgetting a Master of the Revels, and the sports continued for twelve days and more. Besides triumphal processions by land and water and various burlesque performances by day, there were certain "grand nights" of plays, masques, dumb-shows, banquets, and dances. The Queen received them at her palace, and the whole court attended on the chief occasions. The account states (as reprinted by Nichols) that on the second night (December 28th) "a Comedy of Errors (like unto Plautus his Menæchmus) was played by the players." Mr. Spedding agrees with others before him that this must have been the Shakespeare play, as no doubt it was. On this occasion, there was a crowded attendance and such a press of ladies, lords, and gentlemen, whose dignity and sex privileged them from interference, that there was scarcely room on the stage for the actors, and when the Templarian ambassador and his train arrived, "at nine o'clock," there was some confusion for want of room, and they "would not stay longer at that time, but retired, in a sort, discontented and displeased;" and so, as the account states, some other "inventions" intended "especially for the gracing the Templarians" had to be dispensed with, but the "dancing and revelling with gentlewomen" proceeded, and after these sports, the night closed with the performance of this play.

so that, as the account continues, "that night begun and continued to the end, in nothing but confusion and errors; whereupon it was ever afterwards called the Night of Errors." Mr. Spedding appears to think this play was regarded as "the crowning disgrace of this unfortunate Grand Night;" but this would seem to be altogether a mistake, though it may be true enough, if it be understood that the offence taken was, after all, but a part of the sport, and, so far at least as the play was concerned, simply a mock-serious disgrace. It is plain it was not the play that offended the Templarians. In the fourth year of Elizabeth's reign, a like round of Christmas Revels was celebrated at the Inner Temple with equal splendor and magnificence, in which Lord Robert Dudley was elected "Mighty Palaphilos Prince of Sophie, High Constable, Marshall of the Knight Templars, and Patron of the Honourable Order of Pegasus"; and, on one night, there was a "Lord of Misrule" (a standing character on these occasions), and the banquet ended in mirth, minstrelsy, and wine, and, on the following night, there was a grand mock-trial at which the constable, marshal, and common-serjeant were arraigned for the "disorder" and humorously sent to the Tower.<sup>1</sup> And these later Revels at Gray's Inn seem to have been conducted much after the same model: in fact, this "Prince of Purpoole" appears to have been the standing prince of sports and "Lord of Misrule" at this Inn from 1587 until 1618, when the Students of Gray's Inn honored the Lord Chancellor Bacon with an exhibition before him of the "Tilt of Henry Prince of Purpoole" and the "Masque of Mountebanks," with an installation of the "Honourable Order of the Crescent" and a Song for his special "Entertainment."<sup>2</sup> At any rate, this "Night of Errors" was followed, on the very next night, with a mock-trial of the "sorcerer or conjurer that was supposed to be

<sup>1</sup> *Shakes. England*, by G. W. Thornbury, II. 363-9; (London, 1856).  
*Nichols' Prog. James I.*, III. 466.

the cause of that confused inconvenience"; and the indictment concluded thus: "And lastly, that he had foisted a company of base and common fellows to make up our disorders with a play of Errors and Confusions, and that night had gained to us discredit and itself a nickname of Errors: All which were against the crown and dignity of our Sovereign Lord the Prince of Purpoole." But the verdict was, that they "were nothing else but vain illusions, fancies, and enchantments, which might be compassed by means of a *poor harmless wretch* that had never heard of such great matters in all his life;" and so, the "sorcerer or conjurer" was pardoned, and the Attorney, Solicitor, and Master of Requests sent to the Tower for making so much ado about law. Of course, this was all in jest, if not a set part of the programme:—

"Sure, these are but imaginary wiles,  
And Lapland sorcerers inhabit here."

*Com. of Errors, Act IV. Sc. 3.*

And the hint of this conjurer most probably came from the play itself:—

"Along with them  
They brought one Pinch, a hungry lean-fac'd villain,  
A mere anatomy, a mountebank,  
A thread-bare juggler, and a fortune teller,  
A needy, hollow-ey'd, sharp-looking wretch,  
A living dead man. This pernicious slave,  
Forsooth, took on him as a conjurer,  
And, gazing in mine eyes, feeling my pulse,  
And with no face, as 'twere, out-facing me,  
Cries out I was possess'd." — *Act V. Sc. 1.*

Some "graver conceits" were produced on a subsequent night, including a Masque and a formal induction of the Ambassador and twenty-four Templarians into the Honourable Order of the Helmet, together with "divers plots and devices," beginning with a dumb-show, which represented the reconciliation of the offended Templarians; for their displeasure was not so deep but that a grand procession of



all the heroic examples of friendship, Theseus and Perithous, Achilles and Patroclus, Pylades and Orestes, Scipio and Laelius, and lastly Graius and Templarius, "arm in arm," before the altar of the Arch-flamen of the Goddess of Amity, surrounded with singing nymphs and fairies, was sufficient to restore and cement the ancient "league of brotherhood and love between the two Inns." The reading of the Articles for the regulation of the Heroical Order of the Helmet was followed with a variety of music and a banquet served by the Knights of the Order. This being over, a table was set on the stage before the royal throne, around which sat six privy counsellors, and the Masque proceeded. The Prince asked their advice, and each answered in succession. The first advised war; the second, the study of philosophy; the third, the eternal fame to be acquired by building; the fourth, the absoluteness of state and treasure; the fifth praised virtue and a gracious government; and the sixth, pastimes and sports. The Prince preferred the last; and the evening ended with dancing.

On this occasion, the Lord Keeper, Lord Treasurer, and numerous courtiers and great persons, and among them the Earls of Essex and Southampton, were present. The speeches of the Masque are given by Mr. Spedding as unquestionably the work of Bacon; and the presence of these great officers of state may explain why the matter of them is made to point more nearly to those great reforms and improvements which he was so diligently urging upon the attention of his time and country; for he sought, on all occasions, to mingle instruction with amusement.

Mr. Spedding also gives the Articles that were drawn up for the government of the new Order of the Helmet, but he seems to think that these were not written by Bacon; and he tells the story of these Revels in such a manner as to exclude the idea that Bacon was the actual author of anything but the Masque; though he admits, as a probable

conjecture, that he had a hand in the general design, as he had a taste in such things, and did sometimes take part in them. In fact, his hand is also distinctly visible, both in the articles and in the play. The wit of both is of the same order, and decidedly in the Baconian and Shakespearean vein. Being written at nearly the same time and as distinct parts of one and the same series of performances, we should not expect any identity beyond the general style and manner and those minute out-croppings and remote echoes of the same ideas, images, and words, of which the author himself would be almost, if not quite unconscious; but which, nevertheless, are enough to enable an attentive ear to mark his individuality; as in the following instances, compared with the Articles:—

#### ORDER OF THE HELMET.<sup>1</sup>

*"Imprimis.* Every Knight of this Honourable Order, whether he be a natural subject or a stranger born, shall promise never to bear arms against his Highness' sacred person, nor his state; but to assist him in all his lawful wars, and maintain all his just pretences and titles; especially his Highness' title to the land of the Amazons and the Cape of Good Hope."

*"Ant. S.* Where America, the Indies?

*Dro. S.* O! sir, upon her nose, all o'er embellished with rubies, carbuncles, sapphires, declining their rich aspect to the hot breath of Spain, who sent whole armadoes of carracks to be ballast at her nose." — *Act III. Sc. 2.*

*"Item.* No Knight of this Order, in point of order, shall resort to any grammar-rules out of the books *De Duello*, or such like; but shall out of his own brave mind and natural courage deliver himself from scorns, as to his own discretion shall seem convenient."

*"Touch.* O sir, we quarrel in print by the book; as you have books for good manners. I will name you the degrees. The first, the Retort Courteous; the second, the Quip Modest; the third, the Reply Churlish; the fourth, the Reproof Valiant; the fifth, the Countercheck Quarrelsome; the sixth, the Lie with Circumstance; the seventh, the Lie Direct. All these you may avoid but the Lie Direct; and you may avoid that, too, with an 'If.' " — *As You Like It, Act V. Sc. 4.*<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Letters and Life*, by Spedding, I. 329.

<sup>2</sup> Both passages doubtless allude to the same book "*De Duello*," or "*Of Honour and Honourable Quarrels*," by Vincentio Saviolo, printed in 1594. *White's Shakes. (Notes)*, IV. 384.

"*Laun.* Well, the most courageous fiend bids me pack; 'Via!' says the fiend; 'away!' says the fiend; 'for the Heavens, rouse up a brave mind,' says the fiend, 'and run.'" — *Mer. of Ven., Act II. Sc. 2.*

"*Item.* No Knight of this Order shall be inquisitive towards any lady or gentleman, whether her beauty be English or Italian, or whether with care-taking she have added half a foot to her stature; but shall take all to the best. Neither shall any Knight of the aforesaid order presume to affirm that faces were better twenty years ago than they are at this present time, except such knight have passed three climacterical years."

"*Ege.* My youngest boy, and yet my eldest care,  
At eighteen years became inquisitive  
After his brother." — *Com. of Err., Act I. Sc. 1.*

"To conclude: no man can by care-taking (as the Scripture saith) add a cubit to his stature, in this little model of a man's body." — *Essay xxix.*

This word "twenty" is used in this manner as an expletive, times almost without number, in both Bacon and Shakespeare: it is one of his words.

"*Item.* Every Knight of this Order is bound to perform all requisite and manly service, be it night-service or otherwise, as the case requireth, to all ladies and gentlemen, beautiful by nature or art, ever offering his aid without any demand thereof, and if in case he fail so to do, he shall be deemed a match of disparagement to any of his Highness' widows or wards-female; and his Excellency shall in justice forbear to make any tender of him to any such ward or widow."

"But to our honour's great disparagement." — *Act I. Sc. 1.*

"*Eva.* . . . If Sir John Falstaff have committed disparagements unto you." — *Mer. Wives, Act I. Sc. 1.*

"*Item.* No Knight of this Order shall procure any letters from his Highness to any widow or maid, for his enablement or commendation to be advanced in marriage; but all prerogative, wooing set apart, shall forever cease as to any of those Knights, and shall be left to the common laws of this land, declared by the statute *Quia electiones libera esse debent*."

"*Dro. S.* I am an ass; I am a woman's man, and besides myself.

*Ant. S.* What woman's man? and how besides thyself?

*Dro. S.* Marry, sir, besides myself, I am due to a woman; one that claims me, one that haunts me, one that will have me.

*Ant. S.* What claim lays she to thee?

*Dro. S.* Marry, sir, such claim as you would lay to your horse; and she would have me as a beast: not that, I being a beast, she would have me; but that she, being a very beastly creature, lays claim to me.

*Ant. S.* What is she?

*Dro. S.* A very reverend body; ay, such a one as a man may not speak of, without he say, sir-reverence. I have but lean luck in the match, and yet she is a wondrous fat marriage." — *Act III. Sc. 2.*



"*Item.* No Knight of this Honourable Order, in case he shall grow into decay, shall procure from his Highness [for his] relief and sustentation any monopolies or privileges, except only these kinds following : that is to say, upon every tobacco-pipe, not being one foot wide. Upon every lock that is worn, not being seven foot long. Upon every health that is drunk, not being of a glass five foot deep. And upon every maid in his Highness' province of Islington, continuing a virgin after the age of fourteen years, contrary to the use and custom in that place always had and observed."

"*D. S.* . . . — he, sir, that takes pity on decayed men, and gives them suits of durance." — *Act IV. Sc. 3.*

"Against the laws and statutes of this town." — *Act V. Sc. 1.*

"— the great reverence and formalities given to your laws and customs, in derogation of your absolute prerogatives." — *Masque.*

"And then dreams he of cutting foreign throats,  
Of breaches, ambuscadoes, Spanish blades,  
Of healths five fadom deep." — *Rom. and Jul., Act I. Sc. 4.*

"*Item.* No Knight of this Order shall have any more than one mistress, for whose sake he shall be allowed to wear three colours. But if he will have two mistresses, then must he wear six colours; and so forward, after the rate of three colours to a mistress."

It is probable that in the mind of the writer, these "colours" had some kinship with the "Colours of Good and Evil."

"*Nath.* Sir, you have done this in the fear of God, very religiously; and as a certain Father saith —

*Hol.* Sir, tell not me of the Father; I do fear colourable colours." — *Love's L. L., Act IV. Sc. 2.*

"*Item.* No Knight of this Order shall put out any money upon strange returns or performances to be made by his own person; as to hop up the stairs to the top of St. Paul's without intermission; or any such like agilities or endurances; except it may appear that the same performances or practices do enable him to some service or employment; as if he do undertake to go a journey backward, the same shall be thought to enable him to be an ambassador into Turkey."

"*King.* This is the English, not the Turkish court;  
Not Amurath an Amurath succeeds,  
But Harry, Harry." — *2 Hen. IV., Act V. Sc. 2.*

"*Eno.* [Speaking of Cleopatra]. I saw her once  
Hop forty paces through the public street." — *Ant. and Cleo. Act II. Sc. 2.*

"*K. Hen.* . . . Shall not thou and I, between St. Denis and St. George, compound a boy, half French, half English, that shall go to Constantinople, and take the Turk by the beard?" — *Hen. V., Act V. Sc. 2.*

"Such a man  
Might be a copy to these younger times;  
Which, follow'd well, would demonstrate them now  
But goes backward." — *All's Well*, Act I. Sc. 2.

"— or I would send them to the Turk, to make eunuchs of."  
*Ib.* Act II. Sc. 3.

"*Item.* No Knight of this Order that hath had any license to travel into foreign countries, be it by map, card, sea, or land, and hath returned from thence, shall presume upon the warrant of a traveller to report any extraordinary varieties; as that he hath ridden through Venice on horseback post, or that in December he sailed up the Cape of Norway, or that he hath travelled over the most part of the countries of Geneva, or such like hyperboles, contrary to the statute *Propterea quod diversas terrarum ambitus errant et vagantur, etc.*"

"Extraordinary varieties" is particularly Baconian.

"Could all my travels warrant me they live." — *Act I. Sc. 1.*

— "sweet travelling through the universal variety." — *Masque.*

"*Ant. S.* What 's her name?"

*Dro. S.* Nell, sir; but her name and three quarters, that is, an ell and three quarters, will not measure her from hip to hip.

*Ant. S.* Then she bears some breadth?"

*Dro. S.* No longer from head to foot, than from hip to hip: she is spherical, like a globe; I could find out countries in her." — *Act III. Sc. 2.*

And then, the countries are named much in the same style of hyperbole as in this article, and with even greater freedom of wit, as any one may see by reference to the play; and in the "Love's Labor's Lost," written a few years prior to this date, we find his mind running on the same key, as thus:—

"Taffata phrases, silken terms precise,  
Three pil'd hyperboles, spruce affection,  
Figures pedantical." — *Act V. Sc. 2.*

And it is Bacon who says, —

"That the speaking in a perpetual hyperbole is comely in nothing but love." — *Essay x.*

"*Boni.* Will your grace command me any service to the world's end? I will go on the slightest errand now to the Antipodes, that you can devise to set me on; I will fetch you a tooth-picker now from the farthest inch of Asia; bring you the length of Prester John's foot; fetch you a hair off the great Cham's beard; do you any embassy to the Pigmies, rather than hold three words' conference with this harpy." — *Much Ado*, Act II. Sc. 1.

"*Item*. Every Knight of this Order shall in his endeavour to be in the service of the wonderful wonders of the principal city next adjoining to the territories of Burgundy, and none shall immediately, or without looking, pay steady regard to any virtue or good thing pertaining to the gallantry of his Honour's court, or to the exchange of money and other subversion of credit and of man and man."

"*Adm.* How is the man esteem'd here in the city?"

"*Adm.* A very reverend reputation, sir."

"*Adm.* What a highly honour'd!"

"*Adm.* To be sure that lives here in the city." — *Act V. Sc. 1.*

"*Adm.* Good women! make us but believe."

"*Adm.* I repeat I swear that you live so." — *Act III. Sc. 2.*

"*Item*. Every Knight of this Order shall apply himself to some or other virtuous quality or study, if learning, to the arms; and shall not think it sufficient to come into his Honour's presence-chamber in good apparel only, or to be able to keep company at play or gaming. For such it is already determined that they be put and taken for implements of household, and are placed into his Honour's inventory."

"*Ord.* O, sir, I will not be so hard-hearted: I will give out divers schedules of my bounty. It shall be invent'ried: and every particle, and utensil, laid down by what art, item, two lips, indifferent red; item, two gray eyes with white to them; item, one neck, one chin, and so forth." — *Twelfth Night, Act I. Sc. 5.*

"*Item*. Every Knight of this Order shall endeavour to add conference and experience to reading; and therefore shall not only read and peruse Guizo, the French Academy, Galiotto the Courtier, Plutarch, the Arcadia, and the Neoterical writers, from time to time; but also frequent the theatre and such like places of experience; and resort to the better sort of ordinaries for conference, whereby they may not only become accomplished with civil conversation and able to govern a table with discourse; but also sufficient, if need be, to make epigrams, emblems, and other devices appertaining to his Honour's learned revels."

"Once this, — Your long experience of her wisdom,

Her sober virtue, years, and modesty,

Plead on her part some cause to you unknown." — *Act III. Sc. 1.*

"*Adm.* It was the copy of our conference." — *Act V. Sc. 1.*

"What! nothing but tasks, nothing but working days? No feasting, no mauls, no dancing, no triumphs, no comedies, no love, no ladies? Let other men's lives be as pilgrimages, because they are tied to divers necessities and duties; but princes' lives are as progresses, dedicated only to variety and solace." — *Monque.*

"In the afternoon

We will with some strange pastime solace them,

Such as the shortness of the time can shape;



For revels, dances, masques, and merry hours,  
Fore-run fair Love, strewing her way with flowers."

*Love's Labor's Lost, Act IV. Sc. 3.*

"*Item.* No Knight of this Order shall give out what gracious words the Prince hath given him, nor leave word at his chamber, in case any come to speak with him, that he is above with his Excellency, nor cause his man when he shall be in any public assembly to call him suddenly to go to the Prince, nor cause any packet of letters to be brought at dinner or supper-time, nor say that he had the refusal of some great office, nor satisfy suitors to say his Honour is not in any good disposition, nor make any narrow observation of his Excellency's nature and fashions, as if he were inward privately with his Honour; contrary to the late inhibition of selling of smoke."

"*Adr.* What observation mad'st thou in this case,  
Of his heart's meteors tilting in his face?" — *Act IV. Sc. 2.*

"*Lucio.* Sir, I was an inward of his. A shy fellow was the Duke." — *Meas. for Meas., Act III. Sc. 2.*

"Love is a smoke made with the fume of sighs." — *Rom. and J., Act I. Sc. 1.*

"They shoot but calm words, folded up in smoke,  
To make a faithless error in your ears." — *K. John, Act II. Sc. 1.*

"Wherefore, first of all, most virtuous Prince, assure yourself of an inward peace." — *Masque*

"*Bene.* And though you know my inwardness and love  
Is very much unto the Prince and Claudio." — *Much Ado, Act IV. Sc. 1.*

"Opinion is a master-wheel in these cases: that courtier who obtained a boon of the emperor, that he might every morning at his coming into the presence merely whisper him in the ear, and say nothing, asked no unprofitable suit for himself." — *Advice to Villiers.*

"*Fal.* . . . If I had a suit to Master Shallow, I would humour his men with the imputation of being near their master." — *2 Hen. IV., Act V. Sc. 1.*

"A servant or a favourite, if he be inward and no apparent cause of esteem, is commonly thought but a by-way to close corruption." — *Essay of Great Place.*

"Who is most inward with the Duke?" — *Rich. III., Act III. Sc. 4.*

"*Arm.* Sweet smoke of rhetoric!" — *Love's L. L., Act III. Sc. 1.*

"*Arm.* Sir, the King is a noble gentleman, and my familiar, I do assure you, very good friend. For what is inward between us, let it pass. . . . By the world, I recount no fable: some certain special honours it pleaseth his greatness to impart to Armado, a soldier, a man of travel, that hath seen the world; but let that pass." — *Love's L. L., Act V. Sc. 1.*

"*Item.* No Knight of this Order shall be armed for the safeguard of his countenance with a poke in his mouth in the nature of a tooth-picke

with any weapon in his hand, be it stick, plume, wand, or any such like. Neither shall he draw out of his pocket any book, or paper, to read, for the same intent; neither shall he retain any extraordinary shrug, nod, or any familiar motion or gesture, to the same end; for his Highness of his gracious clemency is disposed to lend his countenance to all such Knights as are out of countenance."

"*Ant. E.* And with no face, as 'twere, out-facing me." — *Act V. Sc. 1.*

"*Hol.* I will not be put out of countenance.

*Bir.* Because thou hast no face.

Ay, and worn in the cap of a tooth-drawer.

And now, forward; for we have put thee in countenance.

*Hol.* You have put me out of countenance.

*Bir.* False: we have given thee faces.

*Hol.* But you have out-fac'd them all." — *Love's L. L., Act V. Sc. 2.*

"*Bast.* . . . Now your traveller, —

He and his tooth-pick at my worship's mess;

And when my knightly stomach is suffic'd,

Why then I suck my teeth, and catechize

My picked man of countries. . . .

And talking of the Alps and Apennines,

The Pyrenean and the river Po,

It draws toward supper, in conclusion so.

But this is worshipful society,

And fits the mounting spirit, like myself;

For he is but a bastard to the time,

That doth not smack of observation;

And so am I, whether I smack, or no;

And not alone in habit and device,

Exterior form, outward accoutrement,

But from the inward motion to deliver

Sweet, sweet, sweet poison for the age's tooth."

*K. John, Act I. Sc. 1.*

"*Item.* No Knight of this Order that weareth fustian cloth, or such statute apparel, for necessity, shall pretend to wear the same for the new fashion's sake."

"*Luc.* Your fellow Tranio here, to save my life,

Puts my apparel and my count'nance on,

And I for my escape have put on his.

For in a quarrel, since I came ashore,

I kill'd a man, and fear I was desced."

*Tam. of the Shrew, Act I. Sc. 1.*

"*Tran.* 'Tis some odd humour pricks him to this fashion;

Yet oftentimes he goes but mean apparell'd." — *Ibid., Act III. Sc. 2.*

"*Item.* No Knight of this Order in walking the streets or other places of resort, shall bear his hands in his pockets of his great rolled hose with the Spanish wheel, if it be not either to defend his hands from the cold, or else to guard forty shillings sterling, being in the same pockets."

"*Item.* No Knight of this Order shall lay to pawn his Collar of Knighthood for an hundred pounds; and if he do, he shall be *ipso facto* discharged; and it shall be lawful for any man whatsoever that will retain the same Collar for the term aforesaid, forthwith to take upon him the same Knighthood, by reason of a secret virtue in the Collar; for in this order it is holden for a certain rule that the Knighthood followeth the Collar, and not the Collar the Knighthood."

"*Orl.* He needs not; it is no hidden virtue in him.

"*Con.* By my faith, sir, but it is; never anybody saw it but his lackey; 'tis a hooded valour, and when it appears it will bate."

*Henry V., Act III. Sc. 7.*

"*Item.* That no Knight of this Order shall take upon him the person of a malcontent, in going with a more private retinue than appertaineth to his degree, and using but certain special obscure company, and commending none but men disgraced and out of office; and smiling at good news, as if he knew something that were not true; and making odd notes of his Highness' reign, and former governments; or saying that his Highness' sports were well sorted with a play of Errors; and such like pretty speeches of jest, to the end that he may more safely utter his malice against his Excellency's happiness; upon pain to be present at all his Excellency's most glorious triumphs."

Considering that these Revels were got up in imitation of the former occasion, when there was a "Lord of Misrule" and a mock-trial for the "disorders," it is altogether probable that these Articles were prepared beforehand, as the play certainly must have been, and that the humor of "a play of Errors" sorting with "his Highness' sports" was a part of the original programme, and not an afterthought.

—"the difficulties and errors in the conclusion of nature."—*Masque.*

"*Ant. S.* And thereupon these errors all arose."—*Act V. Sc. 1.*

"*Lew.* And, sure, unless you send some present help,  
Between them they will kill the conjurer."—*Act V. Sc. 1.*

—"or in pretty scorn or disdains to those that seemed to doubt of him."

*Hist. of Hen. VII.*

—"an index and obscure prologue."—*Othello, Act II. Sc. 1.*

—"certain special honours it pleaseth his greatness to impart to Armado."—*Love's L. L., Act V. Sc. 1.*



"*Lastly.* All the Knights of this Honourable Order and the renowned Sovereign of the same shall yield all homage, loyalty, unaffected admiration, and all humble service, of what name or condition soever, to the incomparable Empress of the fortunate Island."

The Masque itself alludes both to the Articles and the play in such manner as rather to indicate that the three performances were all of one piece, and came from one and the same source; especially if it be considered, that they must all have been written before the Revels began; and this is further evident from the fact that among the titles of the Prince, on the first day, was that of "Knight and Sovereign of the Honourable Order of the Helmet," in like manner as before, when the Prince was named "Patron of the Honourable Order of Pegasus," and that in the emblazonry of arms the Prince of Purpoole took "for his Highness' crest the glorious planet Sol, coursing through the twelve signs of the Zodiack or celestial globe, whereupon the nod fills Arctick and Antartick, with this motto: *Dum totum peregravent orbem*"; of which there would seem to be a kind of reminiscence in these lines from the "*Troilus and Cressida*:"—

"Degree being vizarded,  
The unworthiest shews as fairly in the mask.  
The heavens themselves, the planets, and this centre,  
Observe degree, priority, and place,  
Insisture, course, proportion, season, form,  
Office, and custom, in all line of order:  
And therefore is the glorious planet Sol  
In noble eminence enthron'd and spher'd  
Amidst the other."—*Act I. Sc. 3.*

And the resemblances between the masque and the play, if less numerous than those between the play and the articles, are not less striking when they occur, as for instance these:—

"No conquest of Julius Cæsar made him so renowned as the Calendar."  
*Masque.*

"And you the calendars of their nativity."—*Play, Act V. Sc. 1.*

"Have you the very medicine which is the best of all medicines, good  
good of men and of women. — *Alone.*

As a part of the other of the world of the day of the  
Prince's coronation. I am sure you —

"Lady Regent. Above of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world.  
well with the world and the world. Above of the world. Above of the world.  
Purpose of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world.  
having above of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world.  
Chamber of the world of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world.  
Good.

"Lady E. I am sure you know of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world.  
in the world of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world.  
As it is. So it is.

"That your Excellency is the world. Above of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world.  
well with the world. Above of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world.  
light." — *Alone.*

"Lady E. I am sure you know of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world.  
know not what the world is. Above of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world.  
her by her own light. I want to see the world. Above of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world.  
a Prince who is the world. Above of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world.  
the whole world." — *Alone.*

And the same thing is the world. Above of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world. —

"Good. Above of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world.  
Small to the world. Above of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world.  
My heart of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world.  
And the world. Above of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world.  
Light of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world.

And again, thus: —

"For. That is the world. Above of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world. —  
tis in the nose of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world. —  
I never see thy face but I think thou art the world. Above of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world.  
for there he is in his nose. Above of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world.  
to virtue. I would swear by thy face. Above of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world.  
God's name. Above of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world.  
he light in thy face. Above of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world.  
perpetual triumph. Above of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world. Above of the world.

Again, says Bacon. —

"The spirit of man is the Lamp of God, wherewith he searcheth the  
inwardness of all secrets." — *Advancement.*

And one of the speeches in the Masque concludes thus:—

"Neither do I, excellent Prince, restrain my speeches to dead buildings only, but intend it also to other foundations, institutions, and creations; wherein I presume the more to speak confidently, because I am warranted herein by your own wisdom, who have made the first fruits of your actions of State to institute the Honourable Order of the Helmet."

Moreover, there are well-marked traces of the lawyer's hand throughout the play itself: indeed, there is very good internal evidence that the piece was written expressly for this occasion. And it is evident that the writer of this letter had not only invoked the aid of the "dozen young gentlemen of Gray's Inn" and their renowned compeers of the Inner Temple, but had also put in requisition the services of his friend of the Globe theatre, in fulfilment of his engagement, that although "the joint Masque of the Four Inns of Court" had failed, at least Gray's Inn and the courtly Francis Bacon would not fail, upon any occasion, to make an adequate "demonstration of affection" to the Queen, especially when expressly called upon from so high a source as her Majesty's prime minister. And the following passages, in particular, would seem to have been directly aimed at the gowned and wigged assembly, before whom the play was there first produced:—

*Ant. S.* By what rule, sir?

*Dro. S.* Marry, sir, by a rule as plain as the plain bald pate of Father Time himself.

*Ant. S.* Let's hear it.

*Dro. S.* There's no time for a man to recover his hair that grows bald by nature.

*Ant. S.* May he not do it by fine and recovery?

*Dro. S.* Yes, to pay a fine for a periwig, and recover the lost hair of another man.

*Ant. S.* Why is Time such a niggard of hair, being, as it is, so plentiful of excrement?

*D. S.* Because it is a blessing that he bestows on beasts: and what he scants men in hair, he hath given them in wit.

*S.* Why, but there's many a man hath more hair than wit.



*Dro. S.* Not a man of those but he hath the wit to lose his hair."

*Dro. S.* Thus I mend it: Time himself is bald, and therefore, to the world's end, will have bald followers.

*Ant. S.* I knew 't would be a bald conclusion." — *Act II. Sc. 2.*

The whole interest of the fourth act turns on lawsuits, officers, and arrests. Angelo, the goldsmith, becomes litigious: —

*"Ang.* This touches me in my reputation. —  
Either consent to pay this sum for me,  
Or I attach you by this officer.

*Ant. E.* Consent to pay thee that I never had?  
Arrest me, foolish fellow, if thou dar'st.

*Ang.* Here is thy fee; arrest him, officer. —  
I would not spare my brother in this case,  
If he should scorn me so apparently.

*Off.* I do arrest you, sir: you hear the suit.

*Ant. E.* I do obey thee, till I give thee bail. —  
But, sirrah, you shall buy this sport as dear,  
As all the metal in your shop will answer.

*Ang.* Sir, sir, I shall have law in Ephesus,  
To your notorious shame, I doubt it not." — *Act IV. Sc. 1.*

And Dromio's description of a "sergeant" (a bailiff), must have been particularly edifying to such an audience: —

*"Adr.* Where is thy master, Dromio? is he well?

*Dro. S.* No, he's in Tartar limbo, worse than Hell:  
A devil in an everlasting garment hath him,  
One whose hard heart is button'd up with steel;  
A fiend, a fairy pitiless and rough;  
A wolf, nay, worse, a fellow all in buff;  
A back-friend, a shoulder-clapper, one that countermands  
The passages of alleys, creeks, and narrow lands:  
A hound that runs counter, and yet draws dry foot well;  
One that, before the judgment, carries poor souls to Hell.

*Adr.* Why, man, what is the matter?

*Dro. S.* I do not know the matter: he is 'rested on the case."

*Act IV. Sc. 2.*

Of course, it is not impossible that William Shakespeare, without any special learning in the law, should have had some vague notion of what was meant by a "fine and recovery," or an action "on the case"; but (what Lord

Campbell has remarked generally on the legal acquirements of this author) the entire accuracy of his use of legal terms and phrases (a kind of free-masonry which it would be dangerous for a novice to undertake to handle), and the subtle continuity and fitness of the legal ideas, analogies, imagery, and expression, which are woven into the very texture of the discourse, in the many places in these plays, where he has occasion to employ them, are of such a nature as to show, beyond the reach of doubt, that the mental habit of this writer was that of a professional lawyer as well as that of the poet, the scholar, and the philosopher.

Further, on Twelfth Night, the Prince ascended his throne, the trumpets sounded, and six Knights of the Helmet entered, dragging three monsters as prisoners, announcing that they had just returned from aiding the Emperor of Russia against the Tartars, and with the help of Virtue and Friendship had taken Envy, Malcontent, and Folly prisoners; and before the Masque concluded, the King at Arms announced an ambassador from the Emperor with letters thanking the Prince and his Knights for their aid in driving away "an army of Bigarian thieves" and "a host of Negro Tartars."<sup>1</sup> And doubtless, it was to the same wit of invention that Dromio in the play was indebted for his "Tartar limbo worse than Hell."

On the first of February following, there was a triumphal procession of fifteen barges on the Thames, with standards, pennants, flags, and streamers, music and trumpets, and firing of ordnance, in honor of the return of the Prince of Purpoole from Russia. The Queen invited him to land and do homage at Greenwich; but he sent two ambassadors with an apologetic letter to decline the honor. At the Tower, a volley of ordnance was fired by the Queen's desire, and he was received at Gray's Inn with music and acclamations.

<sup>1</sup> *Shaks. Eng.*, by G. W. Thornbury (London), II. 359.

At Shrovetide, the Prince and his train went to Court, where another masque was performed before her Majesty. The actors were an Esquire, a Tartar page, Proteus, and two Tritons, Thamesis and Amphitrite; and it began with a hymn to Neptune. The Squire's speech contained these lines in compliment to Elizabeth: —

"Excellent Queen! true adamant of hearts,  
Out of that sacred garland ever grew  
Garlands of virtues, beauties, and perfections,  
That crowns your crown, and dims your fortune's beams."

The Queen was much pleased, and wished it had been longer. Next day the gentlemen were presented to her by the Lord Chamberlain: she gave them her hand to kiss, commanding Gray's Inn to study such sports for her frequent amusement. The same night, there was fighting in the barriers, the Earl of Essex and the challengers against the Earl of Cumberland and the defendants, the Prince of Purpoole winning the prize, a jewel set with seventeen diamonds and four rubies, which the Queen presented with her own hand.

Surely, we need not wonder to find the young courtier, Francis Bacon, as yet only Queen's Counsel, exerting all the powers of his genius in the invention of these elegant, refined, and intellectual entertainments, in which his great patrons and friends, the Earls of Essex and Southampton, took so large a share, and which received thus the signal countenance and favor of their sovereign mistress. In fact, his contributions to these royal amusements continued far into the next reign and until he became Attorney-General, when, ceasing to be an author in them, he began himself to be the recipient of like honors on special occasions. As a part of the festivities in honor of the nuptials of the Princess Elizabeth and the Elector Palatine, during the Christmas Revels of 1612-13, it came again "to Gray's Inn and the Inner Temple's turn to come with their Masque whereof Sir Francis Bacon was the chief contriver," and



Mr. Phineas Pette was employed, as he says, "by the Gentlemen of Gray's Inn, whereof Sir Francis Bacon was chief, to bring the Masque by water to Whitehall," and "safely landed it at the Privy Stairs." The subject of this Masque, which was written by Francis Beaumont, was "the Marriage of the River of Thames to Rhine."<sup>1</sup> In the next year (Dec. 9th, 1613), Sir Francis Bacon of his own motion, having been made Attorney-General in October preceding, prepares a Masque for his Majesty's entertainment, which, says the account, "will stand him in £2000," declining to accept a contribution towards it "of £500 from Gray's Inn and Mr. Yelverton," and he also "feasts the whole University of Cambridge," at his own expense, now (as Chamberlain writes) "rivaling Woolsey in magnificence"; and the year after (1613-14) on Twelfth Night, the Gentlemen of Gray's Inn, "under the patronage of Sir Francis Bacon" and upon occasion of the marriage of the Duke of Somerset, exhibit a "Masque of Flowers," which was printed, and dedicated by the authors "to the Very Honorable Sir Francis Bacon, His Majesty's Attorney-General."<sup>2</sup>

#### § 8. FRAGMENTS.

Still another Masque, or two fragments (for it breaks into two pieces), has been lately brought to light by the researches of Dixon and Spedding.<sup>3</sup> It comes from the same bundle of the Lambeth MSS., in which were found the speeches for the Essex Masque; but it is a separate paper, in a handwriting of that age, without date, title, heading, or other mark of a strictly historical character, to indicate its origin or purpose. Mr. Spedding evidently believes the piece to have been written by Bacon; and that such was the fact, there is scarcely any room for doubt, for it bears the impress of Bacon's mind and manner in every line of it.

<sup>1</sup> Nichols' *Progr. James I.*, II. 587.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* II. 734.

<sup>3</sup> *Pers. Hist. of Lord Bacon*, 73; *Letters and Life*, I. 386-391.

There is nothing to show that it was originally designed as a part of the Essex Masque, and the internal evidence is very strong that it belonged to another occasion, as early as 1594. One of the speakers is "the Squire" as usual, and his master Erophilus (Essex) is supposed to be doubting in his love between the Queen and Philautia, the goddess of self-love; and the fragment begins with the Squire's speech, introducing "two wanderers," an "Indian youth," and "the attendant or conductor to the Indian prince," who is son of a mighty monarch in "the most retired part" of the "West Indias, near unto the fountain of the great river of the Amazons," whose "rare happiness in all things else is only eclipsed in the calamity of his son, this young prince, who was born blind." But there was "an ancient prophecy that it should be he that should expel the Castilians, a nation of strangers, which as a scourge hath wound itself about the body of that continent, though it hath not pierced near the heart thereof." And this "fatal glory" had caused the King his father "to visit his temples with continual sacrifices, gifts, and observances, to solicit his son's cure supernaturally." But at last an oracle was delivered "out of one of the holiest vaults," to the effect that he should resort to her Majesty's court and person, and make sacrifice to her, if he would be restored to his sight; and he comes with a "high conceit, aiming directly at" her Majesty's self. — Here the fragment breaks off. When it begins again, her Majesty has "wrought the strangest innovation that ever was in the world": his blindness has been supernaturally cured, and he has become "Seeing-Love." Philautia is several times named in the piece; there are illusions in it to the Squire's master, which could be no other than "Erophilus"; and the whole tenor of the story is strictly in keeping with the frame and character of the Essex Masque. One Latin quotation appears in both, "that which the poet saith was never granted *Amare et sapere*"; which is quoted also in the Essay on Love thus:





Now, if there be any trace of all this in the plays, we shall expect to find it in one of those which were written at about the same date, the "Midsummer Night's Dream" (1594), or the "Romeo and Juliet" (1595), and while the same ideas were fresh in the author's memory, and similar visions of the Indies were still floating in his imagination. Let us go, first, straight to the "Midsummer Night's Dream." In the first act, we find no sign of it, but in the second, the following passages come up in their order, in which the careful listener will scarcely fail, at once, to recognize their identities, and catch the ring of the same metal:—

*"Puck.* How now, spirit! whither wander you?

*Fairy.* Over hill, over dale,  
Through bush, through brier,  
Over park, over pale,  
Through flood, through fire,  
*I do wander everywhere,*  
Swifter than the moony sphere;—

*Puck.* I am that merry wanderer of the night.

The King doth keep his revels here to-night.  
Take heed the Queen come not within his sight;  
For Oberon is passing fell and wrath,  
Because that she, *as her attendant, hath*  
*A lovely boy, stol'n from an Indian king:*  
She never had so sweet a changeling:  
And jealous Oberon would have the child  
Knight of his train, to trace the forests wild;  
But she perforce withholds the loved boy,  
Crowns him with flowers, and makes him all *her joy.*

*Tit.* Why art thou here,  
*Come from the farthest steep of India,*  
*But that, forsooth, the bouncing Amazon,*  
*Your buskin'd mistress and your warrior love,*  
To Theseus must be wedded?

*Ober.* I do but beg a little changeling boy,  
To be my henchman.

*Tit.* Set your heart at rest:  
The Fairy-land buys not the child of me.  
His mother was a vot'ress of my order;

And, in the spiced Indian air, by night,  
Full oft hath she gossip'd by my side. —

Which she, with pretty and with swimming gait  
Following her womb, (then rich with my *young squire*),  
Would imitate, and sail upon the land  
To fetch me trifles, and return again,  
As from a voyage, rich with merchandize.

Puck. I remember.

Ober. That very time I saw (but thou could'st not),  
Flying between the cold moon and the Earth,  
*Cupid all arm'd: a certain aim he took*  
*At a fair vestal throned by the West,*  
And loos'd his love-shaft smartly from his bow,  
*As it should pierce a hundred thousand hearts:*  
But I might see young Cupid's fiery shaft  
Quench'd in the chaste beams of the wat'ry moon,  
And the imperial vot'ress passed on,  
*In maiden meditation, fancy-free.* — Act II. Sc. 2.

It is plain we have here the same idea of the “wanderers,” the “Indian youth” born blind, or Cupid, “the attendant,” and even “the Squire” (cropping out in a curious way), coming from the same “most retired part” or “farthest steep” of the Indies, near the fountains of the Amazon; and the same blind boy, Cupid, “armed after the Indian manner with bow and arrows,” or “Cupid all arm'd,” in his ordinary habit “an Indian naked,” but now “for comeliness clad,” has arrived in that land, —

“Where reigns a Queen in peace and honour true;  
Stories or fables do describe no such.  
Never did Atlas such a burden bear,  
As she, in holding up the world oppress;  
Supplying with her virtue *everywhere*  
Weakness of friends, errors of servants best;” —

and, with “high conceit,” he lets fly his love-shaft, “aiming directly at” her Majesty; for he has come to make his sacrifice to “the fair vestal throned by the West,” that he may have “the morning of his eyes.” And in that “fatal glory” that was laid upon him by “an ancient prophecy,” that he should rid his native India of that Castilian scourge.

which had "wound itself about the body of that continent," but had not "*pierced near the heart thereof*;" we have another touch of those same "principles more deep and fatal," derived from "the ancient Cupid," which are of such potency as to "*pierce a hundred thousand hearts*," or as when

— "true lovers have been ever cross'd,  
It stands as an edict in destiny." — *Act I. Sc. 1.*

In the style and manner of the versified part, in the Queen reigning "in peace and honour true," and in the particular mention of her "virtue," her "majesty," and her "policy," surpassing all "stories or fables," we are reminded, at once, of the compliment to her memory in the "Henry VIII.;" the line ending with "*everywhere*," so often repeated in this very play of "A Midsummer Night's Dream," falls on the ear like the refrain of the same song; and one line is almost repeated from the third part of the "Henry VI.," —

"Thou art no Atlas for so great a weight"; — *Act V. Sc. 1.*

and another, from the "As You Like It," —

"That every eye, which in this print looks,  
Shall see *thy virtue witness'd everywhere*;" — *Act III. Sc. 2.*

and the last line closes with a clear ring of the true Shakespearean metal. Certainly, both these oracles must have been delivered out of one and the same holiest vault, or cave, and that no other than Prospero's "full, poor cell."

And if this piece as a whole falls far below his higher flights, it is at least equal, in the rhythm and swing of it, to these lines from the "Titus Andronicus," which have been cited by Mr. White as indubitably exhibiting the hand of Shakespeare in that early play: —

"*Tit.* In peace and honour rest you here, my sons;  
Rome's readiest champions, repose you here in rest,  
Secure from worldly chances and mishaps!  
Here lurks no treason, here no envy swells,  
Here grow no damned grudges; here are no storms,



No voice, but silence and eternal sleep.  
In peace and honour, rest you here, my sons!" — *Act III. Sc. 2.*

Or, to these, again, from the "Love's Labor's Lost": —

"*Bir.* Who sees the heavenly Rosaline,  
That, like a rude and savage man of Inde,  
At the first opening of the gorgeous east,  
Bows not her vassal head, and, stricken blind,  
Kisses the bare ground with obedient breast?  
What peremptory eagle-sighted eye  
Dares look upon the heaven of her brow,  
That is not blinded by her majesty?" — *Act IV. Sc. 3.*

But we have a distinct repetition of almost the same ideas and expression in the following lines from the "Richard II.," written soon afterwards: —

"*K. Rich.* We'll calm the Duke of Norfolk, you, your son." — *Act I. Sc. 1.*

"*Duch.* To seek out sorrow that dwells everywhere." — *Act I. Sc. 3.*

"*Gaunt.* This royal throne of kings, this scepter'd isle,  
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,  
This other Eden, demi-paradise;  
This fortress, built by Nature for herself,  
Against infection and the hand of war;  
This happy breed of men, this little world,  
This precious stone set in the silver sea,  
Which serves it in the office of a wall,  
Or as a moat defensive to a house,  
Against the envy of less happier lands;  
This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England,  
This nurse, this teeming womb of royal kings,  
Fear'd by their breed and famous for their birth,  
Renowned for their deeds as far from home,  
For Christian service and true chivalry,  
As is the sepulchre in stubborn Jewry,  
Of the world's ransom, blessed Mary's son:  
This land of such dear souls, this dear, dear land,  
Dear for her reputation through the world,  
Is now leas'd out, (I die pronouncing it,)  
Like to a tenement or pelting farm." — *Act II. Sc. 1.*

"O, forbid it, God,  
That, in a Christian climate, souls reft'n'd,

Should shew so heinous, black, obscene a deed!

And in this seat of peace tumultuous wars." — *Act IV. Sc. 1.*

Is not this the same land, seat, breed of men, wits refined, majesty? — and the "stories or fables" are merely particularized in the play, with a greater amplification throughout; but the tone, style, and manner are the same. And "the ancient fable of Atlas," says Bacon, "that stood fixed, and bare up the heaven from falling," was "meant of the poles or axletree of heaven; so assuredly men have a desire to have an Atlas or axletree within, to keep them from fluctuation"; and the metaphor is repeated in the play, thus: —

—" (Strong as the axletree  
On which heaven rides) " — *Troi. and Cr. Act I. Sc. 3.*

and in the letter to Essex, thus: —

"And this is the axletree whereupon I have turned and shall turn."

The Masque proceeds thus: —

"Your Majesty's sacred presence hath wrought the strangest innovation that ever was in the world. You have here before you Seeing-Love, a Prince indeed, but of greater territories than all the Indies: *armed after the Indian manner with bow and arrow*, and when he is in his ordinary habit an Indian naked, or attired with feathers, though now for comeliness clad.

["*Bur.* If you would conjure in her you must make a circle; if conjure up love in her in his true likeness, he must appear naked and blind. Can you blame her, then, being a maid yet ros'd over with the virgin crimson of modesty, if she deny the appearance of a naked blind boy in her naked seeing self." — *Henry V., Act V. Sc. 2.*]

To procure his pardon for the *stragem* which he hath used, —

["Alack, alack! that Heaven should practice *stratagems*  
Upon so soft a subject as myself!" — *Rom. and J., Act III. Sc. 5.*]

and to show his thankfulness for his sight which he hath by you received, he presents your Majesty with all that is his; his gift and property to be ever young;

["Then crush this herb into Lysander's eye;  
Whose liquor hath this *virtuous property*,  
To take from thence all error with his might,  
And make his eye-balls roll with wonted sight."  
*Mid. N. Dr., Act III. Sc. 2.*

"Is there not charms,  
By which the property of youth and maidhood  
May be abused?" — *Old. Act I. Sc. 1.*

His wings of Electricity to fly from one to another; his bow and arrows to wound  
where it pleased him;

["And therefore is wing'd Cupid painted blind:

Wings, and no eyes, figure unheedy haste." — *Act I. Sc. 1.*

"And therefore hath the wind-swift Cupid wings."

*Rom. and J., Act II. Sc. 5.]*

and wish'd humbly desir'd that, though Philautia hath hitherto so prevailed with your Majesty, as you would never accept him while he was an imperfect piece, yet now he is accomplished by your Majesty's grace and means, that you will vouchsafe him entertainment. For all the challenge that ever hath been made to Love or his hand, hath been, if it be rightly interpreted, only to his want of eyesight.

["Nurse. Faith, here 't is. Romeo  
Is banished; and all the world to nothing,  
That he dares ne'er come back to challenge you."

*Rom. and J., Act III. Sc. 5.]*

Lovers are charged to aspire too high: it is as the poor dove, which when her eyes are sealed still mounteth up into the air. They are charged with descending too low; it is as the poor mole, which seeing not the clearness of the air diverteth into the darkness of the earth.

["*Her.* O cross! too high to be enthrall'd to low! — . . .  
O spite! too old to be engaged to young! — . . .  
O Hell! to choose love by another's eyes! — . . .  
*Lys.* The jaws of darkness do devour it up."

*Mid. N. Dr., Act I. Sc. 1.]*

They are sometimes charged with presuming too far: it is as the blind man, who looketh in humanity that any seeing man should give him way. They are accused sometimes to be timorous: it is as the blind stalks and flits high when the way is smooth. They are taxed to be credulous: why the blind are ever led. They are said at other times to be incredulous: the blind must feel that which it sufficeth another to see. How can they know times justly, that go by the clock and not by the sun? And how can they know measure, that see as well a mote as a beam.

["*Bir.* You found his mote; the King your mote did see;  
But I a beam do find in each of thee."

*Love's L. L., Act IV. Sc. 3.*

"Nor dare I chide the world-without-end hour,  
Whilst I (my sovereign) watch the clock for you." — *Sonnet.]*



This makes poor lovers used as blind horses, ever going round about in a wheel: and this makes them ever unfortunate, for when blind love leads blind fortune, how can they keep out of the ditch?

[*" Thisb.* O! — As truest horse, that yet would never tire.

*Pyr.* If I were fair Thisby, I were only thine: —

*Quin.* O monstrous! O strange! we are haunted.

Pray, Masters! fly, Masters! help. [*Exeunt Clowns*

*Puck.* I'll follow you, I'll lead you about a round,  
Through bog, through bush, through brake, through brier:  
Sometime a horse I'll be, sometime a hound,

A hog, a headless bear, sometime a fire;  
And neigh, and bark, and grunt, and roar, and burn,  
Like horse, hound, hog, bear, fire, at every turn."

*Mid. N. Dr., Act III. Sc. 1.]*

But now that Love hath gotten possession of his sight, there can be no error in policy or dignity to receive him. Nay, Philautia herself will subscribe to his admission. Then your Majesty shall first see your own invaluable value, and thereby discern that the favours you vouchsafe are pure gifts and no exchanges. And if any be so happy as to have his affection accepted, yet your prerogative is such as they stand bound, and your Majesty is free: . . .

[In maiden meditation, fancy-free.]

Your Majesty shall obtain the curious window into hearts of which the ancients speak; thereby you shall discern protestation from fulness of heart, ceremonies and fashions from a habit of mind that can do no other, afflictation from affection."

[*" Evans.*

Why it is affectations.

But can you affection the 'oman?" — *Mer. Wives, Act I. Sc. 1.*

"*Bir.* Studies my lady? Mistress look on me:  
Behold the window of my heart, mine eye." — *Love's L. L., Act V. Sc. 2.*

"To thee I do commend my watchful soul,  
Ere I let fall the windows of mine eyes." — *Rich. III. Act V. Sc. 3.]*

Again he says:—

"But contrariwise her Majesty, not liking to make windows into men's hearts and secret thoughts"<sup>1</sup>

And this same window of the ancients appears again thus:—

"Let the first precept then (on which the knowledge of others turns) be set down as this: that we obtain (as far as we can) that window which

<sup>1</sup> Letter drafted for Walsingham (1590), Spedd. *Let. and Life*, I. 98.

Momus required; who, seeing in the frame of man's heart such angles and recesses, found fault that there was not a window to look into its mysterious and tortuous windings." <sup>1</sup>

It is very plain that this Masque was written to be exhibited before the Queen. These extracts will be sufficient for the purpose of comparison. William Shakespeare could never have seen this Masque. The "Midsummer Night's Dream," though not printed until 1600, may possibly have been performed on the stage before the Masque was written; but it would be idle to imagine any other kind of plagiarism or imitation to be possible here, than that which one and the same full mind may unconsciously make upon itself; and these outcroppings of the same ideas, words, and expressions, in compositions written at about the same time, are altogether too numerous, striking, palpable, and peculiar to admit of explanation on any supposition of the common usage of the time, or accidental coincidence. And since the "Midsummer Night's Dream" has been assigned, almost by general consent of the critics, to the year 1594, these resemblances to the Masque may be taken as some evidence that these fragments belong to some occasion, which was at least as early as 1594.

<sup>1</sup> Trans. of the *De Aug., Works* (Boston), IX. 271.

## CHAPTER IV.

### MORE DIRECT PROOFS.

"Most true; if ever truth were pregnant by circumstance; that, which you hear, you 'll swear you see, there is such unity in the proofs: . . . the majesty of the creature in resemblance of the mother." — *Winter's Tale*.

#### § 1. THE RICHARD II.

THE statements and allusions contained in Bacon's "Apology" or defence against certain imputations concerning his conduct towards the Earl of Essex, which was addressed to the Earl of Devonshire, and published soon after the death of Essex in 1601, made in relation to an answer which he gave the Queen, towards the close of the year 1599, as he tells us, in "a matter which had some affinity" with Essex's cause, and which was a certain "seditious prelude" then lately dedicated to the factious Earl, being Dr. Hayward's story of the "First Yeare of King Henry IV.," at which the Queen, thinking there was treason in it, was "mightily incensed," when interpreted by the light of the accompanying history and the personal relations of the parties, will be seen to amount to nothing less than a virtually implied admission out of his own mouth that he was himself the author of the play of Richard II.; for it will be made quite certain, that this tragedy was precisely the "matter" alluded to, and no other. It will further appear to be highly probable, that the Queen herself at least strongly suspected, and that even the Lords of the Privy Council had some inkling, that such was the fact. If this be shown to be so, it will be equivalent of itself to a final settlement of the question in hand, and it will require some attention.



That exquisite disgrace which the Queen had been constrained to put upon him, in 1595, had been comfortably solaced in the consideration that her Majesty did but reserve and not reject him, in the princely entertainment and masque at Essex's house, near the close of that year, and in the munificent grant of Twickenham Park immediately following. The tragedy of Richard II. was most probably written after this date, and during the year 1596. There is no mention on record of its existence before it was entered and printed in 1597. Malone and some others have supposed it might have been written as early as 1593-4, and, proceeding upon the assumption that the mention made by Camden and by Bacon of the tragedy of Richard II., in their accounts of the trials of Essex and his co-conspirators, as being an "out-dated" and an "old" play, must have referred to some older play by another author, they were also led to infer, both that some such old play existed, and that it was that older play, and not this of Shakespeare, which was there alluded to. But all this is evidently a mistake; for the Attorney-General, Coke, in his speech on the trial of Merrick, expressly says, that "forty shillings were given to Phillips the player" to play this tragedy before Essex's men. This was no other than Augustine Phillips of Shakespeare's company, and the manager at the Globe and Blackfriars; and it is altogether improbable that any other play of that name would be in use by that company, at that time, and none such is known to have existed. During the year 1595, Daniel published a first and second edition of his "Civil Wars," a poem on the same subject. Mr. White observes some incidents in this second edition, which lead him to infer that Daniel may have used the play to correct his piece; but the inference of Mr. Knight, that the resemblances are due to the fact that the writer of the play had read Daniel's poem, in the course of his preparations for his work, and so, that the play was written after the poem, would seem to be more



manner of doing homage in law? Always it is with a saving of his faith to the king and his other lords; and therefore, my lord, I can be no more yours than I was, and it must be with the ancient savings." There is no certain evidence that the play was produced long before it was printed, in 1597, and the appearance of such a play, on the stage, at this time, could not fail to attract the public attention. Its bearing upon the incipient projects of Essex (though not intended so to refer) could not fail to be perceived; and it is certain that the play received the countenance of Essex, and excited the jealousy of the Queen. When first printed, no name of the author appeared on the title-page, and the entire scene of deposing King Richard, containing one hundred and fifty-four lines (says Malone), was omitted. Malone attributes the omission to fear of the Queen's displeasure, no doubt correctly; but he falls into the mistake of supposing that Dr. Hayward's book was the cause of that fear; whereas that book was not published until the year 1599. Moreover, these lines would very probably be interdicted by the Master of the Revels as censor of the press.

In November 1595, the Queen had taken occasion to show to Essex a certain book (probably that of Doleman) in such manner as greatly to alarm him; but somehow all was made fair again, with the help of a splendid entertainment and the dramatic genius of Bacon. And, in 1596, after the return of Essex from Cadiz, Bacon wrote him an urgent letter of advice "to divert her Majesty from this impression of a martial greatness," for the reason that there could not be "a more dangerous image than this represented to any monarch living, much more to a lady, and of her Majesty's apprehension." In the latter part of 1597, Essex's discontent about the matter of the Earl of Nottingham had been appeased with the office of Earl Marshal of England, and in the next year, the question of sending a general against the Irish rebels came up. The Queen



wished to appoint Sir William Knollys. Essex urged Sir George Carew, and plainly wanted to go himself. In the discussion which arose he was offended, and turned his back on the Queen. Her Majesty marched up and boxed his ears. He was exceedingly wroth, laid his hand on his sword, and, swearing he would not have endured so much from Henry VIII. himself, left the presence in high dudgeon. This eclipse continued from July to October 1598, when the affair was apparently reconciled, and he received the chief command for Ireland, and was commissioned Lord Lieutenant on the 12th of March 1598-9, the Queen reluctantly yielding. Whereupon, Bacon writes him a letter of congratulation in which he says: "That your Lordship is in *statu quo prius*, no man taketh greater gladness than I do; the rather, because I assure myself that of your eclipses, as this has been the longest, it shall be the last. As the comical poet saith, *Neque illam tu satis noveras, neque te illa; hoc ubi fit, ibi non vivitur.*" And in conclusion, he takes care to express himself as bearing unto his Lordship, "after her Majesty, of all public persons the second duty."<sup>1</sup>

Her disposition towards Essex had been kindly and forgiving, but she was doubtful of him, and kept a watchful eye upon his courses. As afterwards it became evident enough, all his movements had reference to a scheme already formed in his mind to depose the Queen by the help of the Catholic party and the Irish rebels. He goes to Ireland in March, 1599, and after various doubtful proceedings and a treasonable truce with Tyrone, he suddenly returns to London in October following, with a select body of friends, without the command, and to the great surprise and indignation of the Queen; and, a few days afterwards, finds himself under arrest, and a quasi-prisoner in the house of the Lord-Keeper. During this year, Dr. Jayward's pamphlet appeared: it was nothing more than a

<sup>1</sup> *Letters and Life* by Spedding, II. 104.

history of the deposing of King Richard II., says Malone. It was dedicated to the Earl of Essex, without the author's name on the title-page; but that of John Hayward was signed to the dedication. This Hayward was a Doctor of Civil Law, a scholar, and a distinguished historian of that age, who afterwards held an office in Chancery under Bacon. This pamphlet followed on the heels of the play, and it may have been suggested by the popularity of the play on the stage, or by the suppression of the deposing scene in the printed copy. According to Mr. Dixon, "it was a singular and mendacious tract, which, under ancient names and dates, gives a false and disloyal account of things and persons in his own age; the childless sovereign; the association of defence; the heavy burden of taxation; the levy of double subsidies; the prosecution of an Irish war, ending in a general discontent; the outbreak of blood; the solemn deposition and final murder of the prince." Bolingbroke is the hero of the tale, and the existence of a title to the throne superior to that of the Queen is openly affirmed in it. A second edition of the "Richard II." had been printed in 1598, under the name of Shakespeare, but with the obnoxious scene still omitted; and it is not until 1608, in the established quiet of the next reign, that the omitted scene is restored in print. It is plain that, during the reign of Elizabeth, it would have been dangerous to have printed it in full; nevertheless, it had had a great run on the stage during these years.

Now, Camden speaks of both the book of Hayward and the tragedy of Richard II. He states that, on the first informal inquiry, held at the Lord Keeper's house, in June 1600, concerning the conduct of Essex, besides the general charges of disobedience and contempt, "they likewise charged him with some heads and articles taken out of a certain book, dedicated to him, about the deposing Richard II." This was doubtless Hayward's book. But in his account of the trial of Merrick (commander at Essex's house),

he says, he was indicted also, among other things, "for having procured the out-dated tragedy of Richard II. to be publicly acted, at his own charge, for the entertainment of the conspirators," on the day before the attack on the Queen's palace. "This," he continues, "the lawyers construed as done by him, with a design to intimate that they were now giving the representation of a scene upon the stage, which was the next day to be acted in reality upon the person of the Queen. And the same judgment they passed upon a book, which had been written sometime before, by one Hayward, a man of sense and learning, and dedicated to the Earl of Essex, viz.: That 't was penned on purpose as a copy and an encouragement for deposing the Queen." He further informs us that the judges, in their opinion, "produced likewise several instances from the Chronicles of England, as of Edward II. and Richard II., who, being once betrayed into the hands of their subjects, were soon deposed and murdered." And when Southampton asked the Attorney-General, on his trial, what he supposed they intended to do with the Queen when they should have seized her, Coke replied: "The same that Henry of Lancaster did with Richard II., . . . when he had once got the King in his clutches, he robbed him of his crown and life." This account of Camden may be considered the more reliable in that, as we know from a MSS. copy of his Annals, which (according to Mr. Spedding) still remains in the Cottonian Library, containing additions and corrections in the handwriting of Bacon, it had certainly passed under his critical revision before it was printed in 1627. And this may help us to a more certain understanding of the allusions, which Bacon himself makes to these same matters, in his Apology and in his account of the trial of Merrick; for, while in the latter he expressly names the tragedy of Richard II., in the former, as also in the Apothegms, the book of Dr. Hayward only is mentioned by name, while there is, at the same time, a



covert (yet very palpable) allusion in them both to the tragedy also, and to his personal connection with it.

The lawyers as well as the judges, Bacon himself included, appear to have made a great handle of this matter of King Richard II. and the tragedy —

"For the deposing of a rightful king." — *Rich. II., Act V. Sc. 1.*

Coke says, in his speech on the trial of Blount, "The story of Richard II., the act of 1 Henry IV., calling a Parliament, putting the king in Pomfret Castle, and the king's death following, are dangerous precedents, and too fitting these indictments"; and again, on the trial of Merrick, he says, "The story of Henry IV., being set forth in a play, there being set forth the killing of the king upon a stage; the Friday before, Sir Gilly, and some others of the earl's train, having an humour to see a play, they must needs have the play of Henry IV. The players told them that was stale: they should get nothing by playing of that; but no play else would serve; and Sir Gilly gives forty shillings to Phillips the player to play this, besides whatever he could get."<sup>1</sup> The grave and crabbed Attorney-General, who had probably never visited a theatre in his life, is evidently more intent upon his points of law than upon any accuracy of names and detail in these theatrical matters; but, while it is clear from the whole context, that the play spoken of was this same tragedy of Richard II., being correctly styled in other places, the passage shows how easily the names were confounded. Bacon makes no such mistake; for, in his speech, it is called "the play of deposing King Richard II."<sup>2</sup> And he further proceeds to cite the example of Richard III., "who (though he were king in possession, and the rightful inheritors but infants) would never sleep quiet in his bed till they were made away; much less is it to be expected that a Catilinarian knot and combination of rebels (who have made an insurrection

<sup>1</sup> Howell's *State Trials*, 1422-5; 1411-2.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

without so much as the fume of a title) would ever endure that a queen, who had been their sovereign, and had reigned so many years in such renown and policy, should continue longer alive than should make in their own turn." Which same "knot" appears again in the play itself, thus:—

"His ancient knot of dangerous adversaries."—*Act III. Sc. 1.*

"Grey. A knot you are of damned bloodsuckers;"—*Ib. III. Sc. 3.*

and thus, again:—

"Will you unknit

This churlish knot of all-abhorred war?"

*1 Henry IV., Act V. Sc. 1.*

Again, he continues, "This construction is no mystery or quiddity of law: the crown is not a garland or mere outward ornament, but consists of preëminence and power; and therefore when the subject will take upon him to give law to the king, and to make the sovereign and commanding power become subject and commanded, such subject layeth hold of the crown, and taketh the sword out of the king's hand":—

"*K. Rich.* Subjected thus,  
How can you say to me, I am a king?"  
*Act III. Sc. 2.*

"*Bish.* What subject can give sentence on his king?  
And who sits here that is not Richard's subject?  
Thieves are not judged, but they are by to hear,  
Although apparent guilt be seen in them.  
And shall the figure of God's majesty,  
His captain, steward, deputy-elect,  
Anointed, crowned, planted many years,  
Be judged by subject and inferior breath,  
And he himself not present?"

I speak to subjects, and a subject speaks,  
Stirr'd up by God thus boldly for his king."

*Act IV. Sc. 1.*

"*King Rich.* For I have given here my soul's consent  
To undeck the pompous body of a king;

Make glory base, and sovereignty a slave,  
Proud majesty a subject, state a peasant."

Act IV. Sc. 1.

"K. Rich. Or I'll be buried in the king's highway,  
Some way of common trade, where subjects' feet  
May hourly trample on their sovereign's head.

North. My lord, in the base court he doth attend  
To speak with you: may it please you to come down?

King Rich. Down, down, I come; like glistening Phaeton,  
Wanting the manage of unruly jades.

In the base court? Base court, where kings grow base,  
To come at traitors' calls, and do them grace.

In the base court? Come down? Down, court! down King!"

Act III. Sc. 3.

Here, we have, in Bacon, *rightful inheritors*, *apparent theft*, and *garland or ornament*; and in the play, *rightful king*, *apparent guilt*, and *undeck*; an identity in the use of words particularly to be noted, as well as the thought, style, and manner.

While Essex was yet in the custody of the Lord Keeper, or under arrest, between October of 1599 and the summer of 1600, and before his treasonable plot had come to a head, or to a decisive and clear breach with the Queen, Bacon, who had warned him against aspiring to a military greatness, who was not in the secret of his scheme, and doubtless believed his wayward courses were due to errors of judgment rather than to any disloyalty at heart, had exhausted all his wit and invention, and at last the patience of the Queen, in his efforts to palliate the conduct of Essex, to assure her of his loyalty, and to obtain for him a restoration to her favor; until, at length, about the month of September of that year (1600), "Essex, drawing now towards the catastrophe," says Bacon, "or last part of that tragedy, for which he came upon the stage in Ireland, his treasons grew to a farther ripeness," and the case became desperate. The Queen, remembering the "continual, incessant, and confident speeches and courses" that he had held, became "utterly alienated" from him, turned her



back upon him, and would scarcely speak to him for three months after, nor until he had made the most passionate appeal to her justice and affection, that whereas he had lost many friends on account of his opposition to Essex, he was now to lose her favor on account of his friendship and zeal in his behalf, and to find himself in the condition of what "the Frenchmen call *enfants perdus*." Whereupon her Majesty was "exceedingly moved," and willed him "to rest upon this, '*gratia mea sufficit*,'" and "a number of other sensible and tender words and demonstrations, such as more could not be"; but, as touching Essex, "*ne verbum quidem*," not a word more.

Meantime, this play of Richard II. has had a great run upon the stage; it has had the open countenance of Essex and his crew, who have been constant auditors at the Globe and Blackfriars; the public mind has caught his drift and understood the application that was being made of it; and even the groundlings have not failed to perceive its bearing upon Essex's disloyal schemes. Hayward's book also comes in, with its express dedication to Essex, its still clearer drift, and its more palpable treason, to add to the general agitation and "put in the people's heads boldness and faction," and still more to inflame the anger and excite the alarm of the Queen. Hayward was seized and sent straight to the Tower, and some months afterwards (August 4th, 1601)<sup>1</sup> when Lambard, Keeper of the Records, waited upon her Majesty at the palace, she exclaimed: "I am Richard, know you not that!" And referring to Essex, she continued: "He that will forget God will also forget his benefactors: this tragedy was played forty times in open streets and houses."<sup>2</sup> Plainly, this was the play, and not the book.

Now, it was late in the year 1599, and as Bacon says, about the middle of Michaelmas term," (that is, about the

<sup>1</sup> Dixon's *Story of Lord Bacon's Life*, (London, 1862), 156.

<sup>2</sup> Knight's *Biography of Shakespeare*, 411.

middle of November,) while Essex was under arrest at the Lord-Keeper's house, he himself having free access to her Majesty, not only as courtier but as counsel in her legal business, and not long after the time when her Majesty had dined at his lodge at Twickenham Park, when, though professing not to be a poet, he had prepared a sonnet "directly tending and alluding to draw on her Majesty's reconciliation" with Essex, that he had the interviews of which he speaks in this Apology and relates the anecdotes which follow. After telling this story of the Sonnet, he proceeds thus:—

"But I could never prevail with her, though I am persuaded she saw plainly whereat I levelled; and she plainly had me in jealousy, that I was not hers entirely, but still had inward and deep respect towards my lord, more than stood at that time with her will and pleasure. About the same time, I remember an answer of mine in a matter which had some affinity with my lord's cause, which, though it grew from me, went after about in other's names. For her Majesty being mightily incensed with that book which was dedicated to my Lord of Essex, being a story of the first year of King Henry IV., thinking it a seditious prelude to put into the people's head boldness and faction, said, she had an opinion that there was treason in it, and asked me if I could not find any places in it which might be drawn within case of treason: whereto I answered: For treason, surely I found none; but for felony, very many. And when her Majesty hastily asked me, Wherein? I told her the author had committed very apparent theft; for he had taken most of the sentences of Cornelius Tacitus, and translated them into English, and put them into his text."

In this Apology, Bacon is vindicating himself from unjust aspersions touching his conduct towards Essex, and he is giving here an account of his intercessions with the Queen in his behalf; and this anecdote, as well as that which follows, is lugged in by way of showing his zeal for Essex, and

they are for the most part digressions ; and having related them, he returns again to the main thread of his subject. After distinctly stating that the Queen plainly had himself in jealousy, that he was not entirely hers, but still had more inward and deep respect towards Essex than stood with her will and pleasure, he introduces the anecdote as consisting in an answer of his in a matter which had some affinity with Essex's cause, which answer grew from himself, and went after about in others' names. He then turns upon Dr. Hayward's book as the thing which had mightily incensed her Majesty ; but that was not the only "matter" he had in mind. That book went only in the name of Hayward himself ; his name was signed to the dedication of it ; he was sent to the Tower for it ; he confessed himself the author of it, in an apologetical letter ; it was attributed to no one else ; and there is no reason to doubt that he was the author of it, nor that the fact was well known both to Bacon and the Queen. Nor is it to be imagined that Bacon himself could have been suspected of having written such a book at that time or any other. But considering the character of that book, its near affinity with the tragedy of Richard II. as well as with Essex's cause, and the personal relations of Essex, Bacon, and the Queen, it becomes highly probable, if not quite certain, that in thus bringing up this matter against Bacon's intercession, with the suggestion that there was treason in it, she either knew, or strongly suspected, that Bacon himself was the author of that play, and meant to throw it up at him in this manner. Bacon sees her drift, and endeavors to parry the blow with a jest. This is further manifest in the allusion to the theft upon Tacitus. The play, as we have seen, was as notorious in this same connection as Dr. Hayward's book ; but being a mere historical drama, written without any reference to Essex's treason, though perverted to his uses, it could not so well be laid hold of. The play did grow from him, and went about afterwards in others' names : Hayward's book



never went in any other name but his own. Bacon himself also tells us, in this same tract, that "in the heat of all the ill news from Ireland" and the agitations going on, while the Council were in session concerning Essex, in November, 1599, "there did fly about in London streets and theatres divers seditious libels, and Paul's and ordinaries were full of bold and factious discourses," to the Earl's disadvantage; and yet the Queen, in her clemency, only "thought herself of a mean to right her own honor, and yet spare the Earl's ruin." The theatre is thus distinctly brought in for a share in the business.

So capital a joke did this piece of wit appear to Bacon, that he could not spare to record it among his Apothegms, thus:—

"58. The book of deposing King Richard the Second, and the coming in of Henry the Fourth, supposed to be written by Dr. Hayward, who was committed to the Tower for it, had much incensed Queen Elizabeth; and she asked Mr. Bacon, being of her learned counsel, Whether there was any treason contained in it? Mr. Bacon intending to do him a pleasure, and to take off the Queen's bitterness with a merry conceit, answered, 'No Madam, for treason I cannot deliver an opinion that there is any, but very much felony.' The Queen apprehending it gladly, asked, How? and Wherein? Mr. Bacon answered, "Because he had stolen many of his sentences and conceits out of Cornelius Tacitus."

The designation here given to the book comes much nearer to a correct naming of the play than it does to the title of Dr. Hayward's pamphlet, and the suggestion that the Doctor was committed to the Tower for only being *supposed* to be the author, and that he, in his answer, intended to do the Doctor a pleasure, looks very much like an attempt at a cover, and is, to say the least, a little curious in itself. That Dr. Hayward had translated out of Tacitus was, of course, a mere pretence; but that the play drew largely upon the "sentences and conceits of Cornelius Tacitus," will be shown to be quite certain.

This was not the end of the matter: it came up again upon a similar occasion, not long afterwards, for the Apology proceeds thus:—

" And another time, when the Queen could not be persuaded that it was his writing whose name was to it, but that it had some more mischievous author; and said with great indignation, That she would have him racked to produce his author: I replied; ' Nay, Madam, he is a doctor; never rack his person, but rack his style; let him have pen, ink, and paper, and help of books, and be enjoined to continue the story where it breaketh off, and I will undertake, by collating the styles, to judge whether he were the author or no.' "

Now, why this question of the authorship of Dr. Hayward's book, when it was published under his own name, and he was confessedly and notoriously the writer of it? But of the author of this tragedy, though printed with the name of William Shakespeare on the title-page, there might have been more room for question; and the racking of his person to produce his author might have been more suggestive to the wit of " Mr. Bacon " than he was willing more openly to confess. The Queen suspected that this matter which grew from him, but went after about in others' names, here supposed to be Dr. Hayward's book (it not being his intention to state more expressly what that " matter " was), had some more mischievous author than even Dr. Hayward; and who, then, was it? certainly, not Essex, to whom it was dedicated, for she doubtless knew very well that he had employed the pen of Francis Bacon in all lengthy papers which he had had occasion to write; and perhaps she thought, or intended to insinuate, if not that it came from the same source as the play itself, at least that it was countenanced by a patronage equally mischievous as that which had encouraged the play; and this threat, that she would have the ostensible writer racked to produce the real author, looks very much like a home thrust at Bacon himself. Again, he averts the blow with a jest; and a very curious jest it was. It will be remembered that the play had been printed in 1598 under the name of William Shakespeare, and that the story of it, the history of the Wars of the Roses, had already been continued in the first and second parts of the " Henry IV." (the deposition of Richard and the usurpation of Henry occurring in the

middle of the play of Richard II.) and in the "Henry V.," which last must have been then (in 1599) actually in hand, or but lately finished; for the following lines of the fifth chorus would seem to have been written before the return of Essex from Ireland, in September of that year:—

"*Chor.* As by a lower but loving likelihood,  
Were now the General of our gracious Empress  
(As in good time he may) from Ireland coming,  
Bringing rebellion broached on his sword,  
How many would the peaceful city quit  
To welcome him."—*Act V. Chorus.*

And the dancer in the epilogue to the second part of the "Henry IV." is made to say, "our humble author will continue the story, with Sir John in it, and make you merry with the fair Katherine of France"; and in the concluding chorus of the "Henry V.," the writer addresses himself to the audience in these words:—

"*Chor.* Thus far, with rough and all unable pen,  
Our bending author hath pursued the story";—

that is to say, the story of the Wars of the Roses, which began with the "Richard II."—

"Containing the deposing of a king."

In like manner, the Prince Hal of the "Henry IV." is predicted in the "Richard II.," in the "unthrifty son" of Bolingbroke, thus:—

"*Bol.* Inquire at London, 'mongst the taverns there,  
For these, they say, he daily doth frequent,  
With unrestrained loose companions;  
Even such, they say, as stand in narrow lanes,  
And beat our watch, and rob our passengers;  
While he, young wanton and effeminate boy,  
Takes on the point of honour, to support  
So dissolute a crew."—*Act V. Sc. 3.*

But in these subsequent pieces, instead of the aspiring Henry Bolingbroke usurping a throne, deposing an anointed king, cherishing rebellion, putting in the people's head boldness and faction, and furnishing a dangerous example,



"too fitting" to these times, of a tragedy which may be transferred from the stage to the state, we have now the facetious Sir John only treasonably corrupting the true prince; and at length the "fat knight" and his author have so grown into favor with the offended Queen, that, as the traditions say, she had herself commanded the story to be continued in another piece; which was done in this same year 1599-1600, in the "*Merry Wives of Windsor*." And if this tradition can be relied on, it may give still further point to the wit of Bacon's answer. This suggestion, that the reputed author should be required to continue the story, and that he would himself undertake to judge, by collating the styles, whether he were the author or no, may possibly be understood to apply to Dr. Hayward's history; but it would thereby lose the best part of the wit: certainly no one was better prepared than himself to judge, by the styles, of the identity of the authorship, if it were the play which he had in his mind. And upon this hint, we also may undertake to judge, by collating the styles, whether or no he were the author of these plays.

Nor was this all. But when the informal inquiry came on, before the Lords Commissioners, in the summer of 1600, Bacon, in a letter to the Queen, desired to be spared from taking any part in it as Queen's Counsel, out of consideration of his personal obligations to his former patron and friend. But the Queen would listen to no excuse, and his request was peremptorily refused. It will be borne in mind that the Queen's object in this inquiry was, to vindicate her own course and the honor of the crown, without subjecting Essex to the dangers of a formal trial for high treason, and that her intention then was to check and reprove him, but not to ruin his fortunes. Bacon made up his mind at once to meet the issue thus intentionally forced upon him, and he resolved to show to her, as he says, that he "knew the degrees of duties"; that he could discharge the highest duty of the subject to the sovereign, against all obligations

of private friendship towards an erring friend ; wherein, says Fuller, very justly, " he was not the worse friend for being the better subject " ;<sup>1</sup> and that if he must renounce either, it should be Essex, rather than the Queen, who had been, on the whole, personally, perhaps, the better friend of the two to him : — well knowing, doubtless, that conduct is oftentimes explained equally well by the basest as by the loftiest motives, and that the latter are generally the most difficult of appreciation. The next thing he heard was, that the Lords, in making distribution of the parts, had assigned to him, " by the conclusion binding upon the Queen's pleasure directly, *volens volens*," that part of the charges which related to this same " seditious prelude " ; at which he was very much annoyed. And they determined, he says, " that I should set forth some undutiful carriage of my lord, in giving occasion and countenance to a seditious pamphlet, as it was termed, which was dedicated unto him, which was the book before-mentioned of King Henry IV. Whereupon I replied to that allotment, and said to their Lordships, that it was an old matter, and had no manner of coherence with the rest of the charge, being matters of Ireland, and thereupon that I having been wronged by bruits before, this would expose me to them more ; and it would be said I gave in evidence mine own tales." What bruits ? What tales ? The Lords, evidently relishing the joke, insisted that this part was fittest for him, as " all the rest was matter of charge and accusation," but this only " matter of *caveat* and admonition : " wherewith he was but " little satisfied," as he adds, " because I knew well a man were better to be charged with some faults, than admonished of some others." Evidently, here was an admonition which he did not like, and it is plain that he took it as personal to himself. Nevertheless he did actually swallow this pill ; for we learn from other history that on the hearing before the Lords Commissioners " the second part of Master Bacon's

<sup>1</sup> *Worthies of England*, II. 422.

accusation was, that a certain dangerous seditious pamphlet was of late put forth into print concerning the first year of the reign of Henry the Fourth, but indeed the end of Richard the Second, and that my lord of Essex, who thought fit to be patron of that book, after the book had been out a week, wrote a cold formal letter to my lord of Canterbury to call it in again, knowing belike that forbidden things are most sought after."<sup>1</sup>

As to what these "bruits" were, some light may be gained from certain letters<sup>2</sup> which were written about the month of December 1599. Bacon himself informs us in the Apology that he had several times dissuaded the Queen from taking proceedings in the Star Chamber against Essex, in consequence of which her Majesty's "face and manner" had not been "so clear and open" to him as before, and when he happened one day to be absent from the Star Chamber, there was "a deep silence" from her to him; and, it seems, he addresses a letter to her, in which he entreated her Majesty "not to impute his absence to any weakness of mind or unworthiness," and complains that all the world was against him, and that his "life had been threatened and his name libelled." He also writes letters to Lord Howard and Sir Robert Cecil, in which he defends himself against certain false aspersions touching his conduct towards Essex, and says, "There is shaped a tale in London's forge," that he had delivered opinion to the Queen that Essex's cause came within case of *præmunire* and high treason; and he denounces these reports as "libels and lies," having their "root in some light-headed envy at his accesses," and suggests that "these courses and *bruits* hurt Essex more than all." No doubt these were the "bruits," which had been raised against him before; but there is nowhere allusion to any tales, of which it could be said he gave in evidence his own, unless it were this same "matter."

<sup>1</sup> Morrison's *Itinerary*, Works XVI. (Mont.), Note 4c. Part II.

<sup>2</sup> *Letters and Life*, by Spedding, II. 160-3.



And so, as he had been wronged before by these bruits, this part, now, would expose him still more to "libels and lies" of the same kind, and it would also be said he gave in evidence his own tales!

Thus we see how Essex had been compelled to disclaim this dedication; and Bacon was now made to swallow his part in that business (whatever it was) by an express conclusion of the Queen's pleasure. His first objection to the allotment is, that this part of the charge was an "old matter." But this dedication was not so very old a matter, not older than the matters of Ireland, being scarcely a year old; but the play was somewhat older, and he might very well urge that this tragedy had nothing to do with Essex's treason in Ireland, which was of later date than the play. There had been bruits to his prejudice before, and this "old matter" would expose him to them still more, and it would be said he gave in evidence his own tales! As to these tales and this "matter" which grew from himself, he still preferred to go about in others' names. According to Mr. Tobie Matthew, it had been just so with the most prodigious wit in all England, whose name was Francis Bacon, though known by another. And as some further proof that this play of Richard II. made an equal figure with Hayward's book in all these troubles and in the public mind, and was precisely that very same "old matter," and none other, we may take Bacon's own construction (wherein the old matter becomes the *old play*) from his account of the trial of Merrick, which runs thus:—

"The afternoon before the rebellion, Merrick, with a great number of others, that afterwards were all in the action, had procured to be played before them the play of deposing King Richard the Second; neither was it casual, but a play bespoken by Merrick, and not so only, but when it was told him by one of the players, that the play was old and they should have loss in playing it, because few would come to see it, there was forty shillings extraordinary given

to play, and so, thereupon, played it was. So earnest was he to satisfy his eyes with the sight of that tragedy, which he thought soon after his lordship should bring from the stage to the state, but that God turned it upon their own heads." <sup>1</sup>

Again, this account of the tragedy of Richard II. may throw some light on the behaviour of the Queen towards Bacon (and Essex) in the matter of his promotion. As we have seen, the name of Essex had been used publicly in connection with the schemes of the Jesuits as early as 1594. Bacon was avowedly the confidential counsellor and a known adherent of Essex and his party. Essex's countenance of this play and of Hayward's book had been viewed by her in the light of undutiful carriage toward his sovereign; and when an opportunity occurred, it was made a ground of formal accusation against him. The unfortunate subsidy speech may not have been the only objection to Bacon's advancement. He had never actually repented of that error, but rather justified his course; an offence which might easily be pardoned and forgotten. It had been so far overlooked that she had continued to employ him in her legal business, though without a regular appointment as Queen's Counsel, and she had rewarded his services with various gifts and grants, and bestowed upon him many marks of her favor. But this matter of a persistent adherence to the fortunes of Essex, even in his wayward courses, while these machinations were abroad using his name and his title from Edward III. in a way that tended to her dethronement, being an affair of high political import as well as personal to herself, was neither to be countenanced nor forgotten, though it might be endured. It was plain to the actors themselves, in the repeated efforts made for his advancement, during these years, that some secret and inexplicable quirk had got possession of her mind: she held fast to the Cecils and resisted all solicitations in his

<sup>1</sup> *Declaration of the Treason of Robert Earl of Essex, Works* (Philad.) 365.

behalf. During her whole reign, her mind had been disturbed with anxieties about her title to the throne. The several successive conspiracies of Campion, Throckmorton, and Parry and Babington, down to the beheading of Mary Queen of Scots, in 1587, had been contrived and suppressed; and still, in 1594, Parsons and Inglefield were at work. Essex, though a kinsman and favorite, was a great noble and the leader of a powerful party, which it was not safe to allow to become too powerful. Her latest days were disquieted by doubts of her own ministers; and it need not appear surprising that she was unwilling to place Essex's confidential adviser in the line of promotion to the highest offices in the State, nor that an apprehension so secret and profound should not appear on the surface of things. So, when the question of the Solicitorship came up, she was in no haste "in determining of the place," as we learn from the Letters. She answered Essex that "Bacon had a great wit and much learning, but that in law he could show to the uttermost of his knowledge, and was not deep"; and that had to be taken for an answer. It was not always the jealousy of the Cecils that stood in his way; both Lord Burghley and Sir Robert Cecil now urged his suit. It was laid to Lord-Keeper Puckering; but the Queen was "never peremptory but to my lord of Essex." When Essex was "passionate" for him, she was "passionate against him"; and bid Essex "go to bed, if he could think of nothing else." She said to Essex, "she showed her mislike to the suit" as well as he "his affection for it"; and that "if there were to be a yielding, it was fitter to be" of his side. Did she fear that he would put in the people's head boldness and faction, with his seditious preludes? Did she know that Essex was even aspiring to her crown, or, at least, looking to be her successor?

"And you that do abet him in this kind,  
Cherish rebellion, and are rebels all."—*Rich. II., Act II. Sc. 3.*

So, the honorable offender in the "Timon" had been known



— "to commit outrages,  
And cherish factions;"

as Bacon says of M. Portius Cato, that "he had a bitter tongue, and loved to cherish factions."

He writes to his brother Anthony: "This is Essex, and she is more angry with him than with me. . . . My conceit is, that I am the least part of my own matter; . . . for I know her Majesty's nature, that she neither careth though the whole surname of Bacons travelled, nor the Cecils neither." And he adds, "But what the secret of it is, *oculus aquilæ non penetravit*." The secret of it, or at least one rational explanation of it, and that not beyond the reach of an eagle eye, would seem to be clearly revealed in course of the progress of this Essex drama. In the very next act of it, now in 1599-1600, Essex's schemes are brought to a head and final issue. Bacon is forced decisively and once for all to choose between him and her: he cannot serve two masters. In the next act, he is compelled to prosecute his old friend and patron, no excuse admitted, on that particular part of the charge which related to those "factious and seditious preludes which had been flying about the streets and theatres of London," and which had a near affinity with Essex's cause, including that tragedy, which had been "played forty times in London streets and houses," — that very "matter" which grew from him, "and went after about in others' names." And in the last act, her Majesty's learned counsel adduces as proof of treason against Merrick, late "Commander over Essex's House," that he had specially procured the play of Richard II. to be enacted before Essex's men, thinking his lordship was about to bring that tragedy from the stage to the state, even at the risk of giving in evidence his own tales!

After this significant hint from Bacon himself, that whole "sentences and conceits" had been transferred from Tacitus into the play, it should be expected, if this interpretation be correct, that some traces of them would be found in

it; and herein we have a remarkable confirmation of the truth of the supposition. Tacitus was a favorite author with Bacon. Much of the brevity and neatness of the style of both Bacon and the plays may be due, in some degree, to the model of Tacitus. "Of all stories," says he, "I think Tacitus simply the best." And in the speech on the King's Messages (1609), he alludes to Tacitus's account of Nerva and Nero, in these words:—

"If the king's sovereignty receive diminution, or any degree of contempt, . . . . we shall be a meteor, or '*corpus imperfectè mistum*,' which kind of bodies come speedily to confusion and dissolution. And herein it is our happiness, that we may make the same judgment of the king, which Tacitus made of Nerva: '*Divus Nerva res olim dissociabiles miscuit, imperium et libertatem*.' Nerva did temper things that before were thought incompatible, or insociable, sovereignty and liberty." And again, in the Advance-ment: "What was the cause of Nero's fall or overthrow? Apollonius answered again: Nero could tune the harp well; but in government he always either wound up the pins too high, and strained the strings too far; or let them down too low, and slackened the strings too much.

["Iago. *[Aside.]* O! you are well tun'd now;  
But I'll set down the pegs that make this music."

*Oth., Act II. Sc. 1.]*

Here we see the difference between regular and able princes, and irregular and incapable, Nerva and Nero. The one tempers and mingles the sovereignty with the liberty of the subject wisely; and the other doth interchange it, and vary it unequally and absurdly." In Tacitus we find these words: "*Nerva Cæsar res olim dissociabiles miscuerit, Principatum ac libertatem*"; and again: "*Sed imperaturus es hominibus, qui nec totam servitutem pati possunt, nec totam libertatem.*"<sup>1</sup> And the same ideas and imagery are clearly discernible in the following passages from the play:—

<sup>1</sup> Tac. *Hist.* I. 16.

"*K. Rich.* For I have given here my soul's consent,  
T' undeck the pompous body of a king;  
Make glory base, and sovereignty a slave,  
Proud Majesty a subject, state a peasant." — *Act IV. Sc. 1.*

"Which so rous'd up with boisterous untun'd drums."  
*Act I. Sc. 3.*

"*North.* His tongue is now a stringless instrument."  
*Act II. Sc. 1.*

"*Norf.* And now my tongue's use is to me no more,  
Than an unstringed viol, or a harp;  
Or like a cunning instrument cas'd up  
Or, being open, put into his hands  
That knows no touch to tune the harmony." — *Act I. Sc. 3.*

"*K. Rich.* This music mads me: let it sound no more,  
For though it have help madmen to their wits,  
In me, it seems, it will make wise men mad."  
*Act V. Sc. 5.*

Wherewith the following sentences from Tacitus concerning Nero and his devotion to music and the harp (*cithera*), may also be compared:—

"Vetus illi cum erat, curriculo quadrigarum insistere; nec minus fedum studium, cithera ludicum in modum canere, cum cœnaret; quid Regibus et antiquis Ducibus factitatum memorabat." — *Tac. Ann. XIV. 14.*

"Ingreditur theatrum, cum cithæræ legere obtemperans." — *Ib. XVI. 4.*

"Postremo ipse scenam incedit, multa cura tentans citheram." — *Ib. XIV. 15.*

"Quia est Nero cithera, ita Piso tragico ornatu, canebat." — *Ib. XV. 39.*

In the letter of "Advice to the Earl of Rutland on his Travels," written for Essex in 1596, the same year with this play, there are some expressions which may remind the reader of the character of Richard, and also of certain lines of the play:—

"But if there be not in nature some partner to this active strength, it can never be obtained by any industry; for the virtues which are proper unto it are liberality or magnificence, and fortitude or magnanimity; and some are by nature so covetous or cowardly, as it is as much in vain to seek to enlarge or inflame their minds as to go about to plough the rocks.

["And for our eyes do hate the dire aspect  
Of civil wounds plough'd up with neighbor's swords."  
*Act I. Sc. 3.]*



Clearness of judgment makes men liberal, for it teacheth men to esteem of the goods of fortune not for themselves, for so they are but justice to them, but for their use, for so they are lent over them; and it makes us to know that it is justice done, given us; the one being a badge of sovereignty, the other of subjection. . . . The observation of proportion or likeness between one person or one thing and another makes nothing without example, nor nothing new: and although example illustrate, nor prelate, examples may make things plain that are proved, but prove not themselves; yet, when circumstances agree, and proportion is kept, that which is probable in one case is probable in a thousand, and that which is reason once is reason ever:—

“Why should we in the compass of a pale,

Keep law and form and due proportion,

Blowing, as in a model, our firm estate?”

*Act III. Sc. 4.*

The judgment of Apollonius (an author much cited by Bacon) upon the cause of Nero's fall, “that he could tune the harp well,” but, in government, “wound up the pins too high,” or “let them down too low,” that is, “knew no touch to tune the harmony,” was an anecdote that had been impressed upon Bacon's mind; and this imagery, derived from the tuning of instruments, and from the harp, as well as the ideas, must have gone by the same road into the play. Bacon could not have derived these stories from the play, and there is not the remotest probability that Shakespeare could have been familiar, at once, with the writings of Tacitus and these sayings of Apollonius; and it is certain he could have borrowed nothing for this play from the Speech, or from the Advancement. And the same imagery shows itself again in the *De Augmentis*, thus:

“This variable and subtle composition and structure of man's body has made it as a musical instrument of much and exquisite workmanship, which is easily put out of tune. And therefore the poets did well to conjoin music and medicine in Apollo; because the genius of both these arts is almost the same; for the office of the physician is but to know how to stretch and tune the harp of man's body, that the harmony may be without all harshness or discord.”<sup>1</sup>

Again he writes:

“And in music, I ever loved easy airs, that go full all the parts together and not these strange points of accord and discord.”

<sup>1</sup> Spedding's *Tran. of the De Aug., Works* (Boston), IX., 25.

Compare, again, these "conceits" from Tacitus with the lines cited from the play, as follows:—

"Præter multiplices rerum humanarum casus, cælo terroque prodigia et fulminum monitus et futurarum præsagia, læta, tristia, ambigua, manifesta.<sup>1</sup> . . . . Prodigia, . . . . vis fulgarum, . . . . sidus cometes, sanguis, . . . . vitulus cui caput in cruce esset.<sup>2</sup> Vidisse civium moestas vulvæ.<sup>3</sup> Nero, . . . . rumor ipso tempore, flagrantis urbis, inesse cum domesticam scenam et cecinisse Trojanum excidium.<sup>4</sup> Finis Neronis, . . . . evulso Imperii arcano, posse Principem alibi, quam Romæ fieri."<sup>5</sup>

"*Capt.* 'T is thought the King is dead: we will not stay.

The bay-trees in our country are all wither'd,  
And meteors fright the fixed stars of heaven;  
The pale-fac'd moon looks bloody on the Earth,  
And lean-look'd prophets whisper fearful change:  
Rich men look sad, and ruffians dance and leap:

These signs forerun the death or fall of Kings.

*Sal.* Ah, Richard, with the eyes of heavy mind,  
I see thy glory, like a shooting star,  
Fall to the base earth from the firmament."—*Act II. Sc. 4.*

The identity of the ideas and imagery here is so clear and palpable as to need no comment. Some trace may also be observed in these lines of the author's reading of Holinshed's history of Richard II., in which it is related that "in this year (1399), in a manner throughout all the realme of England, old baie-trees withered, and afterwards, contrarie to all men's thinking, grew greene againe, a strange sight, and supposed to impart some unknown event";<sup>6</sup> but Holinshed makes no mention of meteors, the fixed stars of heaven, the pale-faced moon, prophets whispering fearful change, rich men looking sad, the unstrung viol and the harp, nor ruffians dancing and leaping: these come from Tacitus.

So, also, Bacon says in the Essay of Seditions and Troubles:—

"When discords, and quarrels, and factions, are carried openly and audaciously, it is a sign the reverence of government is lost; for the

<sup>1</sup> *Tac. Hist.* I. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Tac. Ann.* XII. 47.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* XV. 36.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* XV. 39.

<sup>5</sup> *Tac. Hist.* I. 4.

<sup>6</sup> *Chron. of Eng.* II. 850.

motions of the greatest persons in a government ought to be as the motions of the planets under *primum mobile* (according to the old opinion), which is that every of them is carried swiftly by the highest motion, and softly in their own motion; and therefore, when great ones in their own particular motion move violently, and, as Tacitus expresseth it well, '*liberius quam ut imperantium meminissent*,' it is a sign the orbs are out of frame."

"*K. Henry.* Will you again unknit  
This churlish knot of all abhorred war,  
And move in that obedient orb again,  
Where you did give a fair and natural light,  
And be no more an exhal'd meteor,  
A prodigy of fear, and a portent  
Of broached mischief to the unborn times?"

1 *Hen. IV.*, Act V. Sc. 1.

It will be borne in mind that this Essay first appeared in the edition of 1625, and of course William Shakespeare could never have borrowed anything from it for these plays, otherwise than as they came through the mind of Bacon himself. This Essay, like many others of them, is full of quotations from Tacitus, and the ideas, imagery, and very language of the Essay may be distinctly recognized by a careful reader throughout the play. When the sentences and conceits are wrenched from their contexts, the resemblances are less striking; but a few instances will be sufficient to show that there is ample ground for this assertion:—

"Libels and licentious discourses against the State, when they are frequent and open; and in the like sort false news often running up and down, to the disadvantage of the State, and hastily embraced, are among the signs of troubles."

"Act III. Sc. 4.—*Duke of York's Garden.*

"*Queen.* But stay, here come the gardeners:  
Let's step into the shadow of these trees.—  
My wretchedness unto a row of pins,  
They'll talk of State; for every one doth so  
Against a change. Woe is forerun with woe."

"Shepherds of people had need to know the calendars and tempests in State, which are commonly greatest when things grow to equality:"—

"*Gard.* Go thou, and like an executioner,  
Cut off the heads of too-fast-growing sprays,



That look too lofty in our commonwealth:

All must be even in our government. —

1 *Servt.* Why should we, in the compass of a pale,  
Keep law and form and due proportion,  
Shewing, as in a model, our firm estate,  
When our sea-wall'd garden, the whole land,  
Is full of weeds?"

The talk of the gardeners then goes on about Richard's "disordered spring" and those "weeds," the Earl of Wiltshire, Bushy, Green, that he had suffered to grow up in his untrimmed garden, and Bolingbroke, who had "seized the wasteful king," ending thus:—

"1 *Servt.* What! think you then, the King shall be depos'd?

*Gard.* Depress'd he is already; and depos'd,

'T is doubt, he will be."

"For high conceits do come streaming into the imaginations of base persons; especially when they are drunk with news and talk of the people."

*History of Henry VII.*

"*Queen.* O, I am press'd to death, through want of speaking!

[*Coming forward.*

Thou, old Adam's likeness, set to dress this garden,  
How dares thy harsh, rude tongue sound this displeasing news?  
What Eve, what serpent hath suggested thee  
To make a second fall of cursed man?  
Why do'st thou say King Richard is depos'd?  
Dar'st thou, thou little better thing than earth,  
Divine his downfall? Say, where, when, and how,  
Cam'st thou by these ill-tidings? Speak, thou wretch."

"Also, as Machiavel noteth, when princes that ought to be common parents, make themselves as a party, and lean to one side, it is as a boat that is overthrown by uneven weight on the one side."

"*Gard.* Pardon me, madam: little joy have I,  
To breathe these news, yet what I say is true.  
King Richard, he is in the mighty hold  
Of Bolingbroke: their fortunes both are weigh'd:  
In your lord's scale is nothing but himself,  
And some few vanities that make him light;  
But in the balance of great Bolingbroke,  
Besides himself, are all the English peers,  
And with that odds he weighs King Richard down."

"So when any of the four pillars of government are mainly shaken, or



"And as there are certain hollow blasts of wind and secret swelling of seas before a tempest, so are there in states." —

"This lowering aspect of your home-land heath." — *Act I. Sc. 2.*

"*Ann.* How breaks your grace the air,  
After late treading on the breaking seas?" — *Act III. Sc. 2.*

"For it is true that every vapour, or flame, shall not turn into a storm, so it is nevertheless true, that storms, though they blow over diverse times, may come at last." —

"*Scarp.* Like an unreasonable stormy day,  
Which makes the silver stream-droves their shores,  
As if the world were all dissolved in tears,  
So high above his limits swells the rage  
Of Bellingmike, —" — *Act III. Sc. 2.*

"*Sol.* Thy sun sets weeping in the lowly west,  
Warning storms to come, wise and earnest." — *Act II. Sc. 4.*

"*Nord.* But hark, we hear this fearful tempest sing,  
Yet seek no shelter to avoid the storm." — *Act II. Sc. 2.*

"*Ille etiam cecus instans tumultus  
Sæpe monet, fronsæque aperta timescere bella.*" — *Æneid. xv.*

"Were it, that before such great things, men's hearts of a secret instinct of nature misgive them; as the sea without wind swells of himself before a tempest." — *Holme's History of Richard III., Vol. III., 279.*

"*3 Cl.* Before the days of change, still is it so.  
By a divine instinct men's minds mistrust  
Ensuing danger; so by proof we see  
The water swell before a boisterous storm."

*Richard III., Act II. Sc. 2.*

"For when the authority of princes is made but an accessory to a cause, and that there be other hands that tie faster than the hand of sovereignty, kings begin to be put almost out of possession:" —

"*Queen.* I will despair, and be at enmity  
With cowering hope: he is a flatterer,  
A parasite, a keeper-back of death,  
Who gently would dissolve the bands of life,  
While false hope lingers in extremity." — *Act II. Sc. 2.*

"*Fitz.* — there is my bond of faith  
To tie thee to my strong correction." — *Act IV. Sc. 1.*

"Certainly, the politic and artificial nourishing and entertaining of hopes, and carrying men from hopes to hopes, is one of the best antidotes against the poison of discontents; and it is a certain sign of a wise government and proceeding, when it can hold men's hearts by hopes, when it cannot by satisfaction; and when it can handle things in such manner as no evil shall appear so peremptory but that it hath some outlet of hope!" —



"K. Rich. What comfort have we now?  
By Heaven, I'll hate him everlastingly  
That bids me be of comfort any more.  
Go to Flint Castle; there I'll pine away;  
A king, woe's slave, shall kingly woe obey.  
That power I have, discharge; and let 'em go  
To ear the land that hath some hope to grow,  
For I have none." — *Act III. Sc. 2.*

"To give moderate liberty for griefs and discontentments to evaporate (so it be without too great insolency or bravery), is a safe way. For he that turneth the humors back, and maketh the wound bleed inwards endangereth malign ulcers and pernicious imposthumations;" —

"K. Rich. For that our kingdom's earth should not be soil'd  
With that dear blood which it hath foster'd,  
And for our eyes do hate the dire aspect  
Of civil wounds plough'd up with neighbour's swords:" — *Act I. Sc. 3.*

"Aun. You holy clergymen, is there no plot  
To rid the realm of this pernicious blot?" — *Act IV. Sc. 1.*

"Gunt. And let thy blows, doubly redoubled,  
Fall like amazing thunder on the casque  
Of thy amaz'd pernicious enemy." — *Act I. Sc. 3.*

"This is the imposthume of much wealth and peace,  
That inward breaks, and shews no cause without  
Why the man dies." — *Hamlet, Act IV. Sc. 4.*

"I understand a fit head to be one that hath greatness and reputation:" —

"Gunt. Thy death-bed is no lesser than the land,  
Wherein thou liest in reputation sick." — *Act II. Sc. 1.*

"Nor. The purest treasure mortal times afford  
Is spotless reputation." — *Act I. Sc. 1.*

"For I see sometimes the profounder sort of wits, in handling some particular argument, will now and then draw a bucket of water out of this well for their present use; but the spring-head thereof seemeth to me not to have been visited." — *Adv. of Learning, II.*

"Bol. That all the treasons for these eighteen years  
Complotted and contrived in this land,  
Fetch'd from false Mowbray their first head and spring."  
*Act I. Sc. 1.*

"K. Rich. Now is this golden crown like a deep well,  
That owes two buckets, filling one another;  
The emptier ever dancing in the air,  
The other down, unseen, and full of water:  
That bucket down, and full of tears, am I,  
Drinking my grief, whilst you mount up on high."  
*Act IV. Sc. 1.*

"Surely princes had need in tender matters and ticklish times to beware what they say, especially in these short speeches, which fly abroad like darts, and are thought to be shot out of their secret intentions:" —

"K. Rich. And darts his light through every guilty hole."

Act III. Sc. 2.

"York. While all tongues cried, — 'God save thee, Bolingbroke!'  
You would have thought the very windows spake,  
So many greedy looks of young and old  
Through casements darted their desiring eyes  
Upon his visage." — Act V. Sc. 2.

"Such men in other men's calamities, are, as it were, in season, and ever on the loading part; not so good as the dogs that licked Lazarus' sores, but like flies that are still buzzing upon everything that is raw." — *Essay*, xiii.

"K. Rich. O, villains, vipers, damn'd without redemption!

Dogs, easily won to fawn on any man!" — Act III. Sc. 2.

These passages may be left to speak for themselves. It is also worthy of notice that the word *instrument* is much used by both Bacon and Shakespeare, in a metaphorical way, and peculiarly in the Latin sense of Tacitus; as for instance, we have, in Tacitus, "*mathematicos, . . . . pessimum Principalis matrimonii instrumentum,*" and "*ut haberet instrumenta servitutis et Reges,*" and "*sed sola instrumenta vitiorum*"; and in the plays, "the instruments of darkness," "the mortal instruments," "a serving man and instrument," and "that hath to instrument this lower world"; and, in Bacon, "the wicked instruments only of other men's malice," and "the actors and instruments," "the organs and instruments," "the fittest instrument to do good to the state," and "practised by subtile instruments to draw them on," and "but as a divine instrument, though a mortal man." And the favorite metaphor of both Bacon and the plays, derived from instruments of music and the tuning of instruments, appears in the Advancement, thus: —

"Being at some pause looking back into that I have passed through, this writing seemeth to me, '*si numquam fallit imago,*' as far as a man can judge of his own work, not much better than the noise, or sound, which musicians make, while they are tuning their instruments, which is nothing pleasant to hear, but yet is a cause why the music is sweeter afterwards: so have I been content to tune the instruments of the muses, that they may play that have better hands:" —

"His tongue is now a stringless instrument." — *Rich. II.*

It is true, the author of this play, in the historical part, very closely followed the history of Holinshed; as for one instance, in Holinshed, the Earl of Arundel, turning to Sir John Bushie, says, "not the King's faithful commons require this, but thou, and what thou art I know"; and in the "*Richard II.*," it appears thus:—

"*Norf.* No Bolingbroke: if ever I were traitor,  
My name be blotted from the Book of Life,  
And I from Heaven banish'd, as from hence!  
But what thou art, God, thou, and I do know." — *Act I. Sc. 3.*

So Holinshed speaks of Richard lamenting his miserable state, "when now it was too late:"—

"One day too late, I fear, my noble lord,  
Hath clouded all thy happy days on Earth." — *Act III. Sc. 2.*

But the parallel ideas, expressions, and allusions in these writings of Bacon, as well as that particular allusion to the Salic law, in the *Apothegms*, in reference to which the speech in the "*Henry V.*" is almost literally versified out of Holinshed, with a like allusion to the book of Numbers and to the French gloss as in the *Apothegms*, not to mention many other similar instances, would seem to furnish pretty satisfactory evidence that Holinshed was transferred to the play, through the mind of Francis Bacon and not of William Shakespeare. Indeed, the critical reader, who shall diligently compare the entire play with the writings of Bacon and Tacitus, can scarcely fail to discover translations and similitudes enough, not only to justify the expectation of traces in it of the "sentences and conceits of Cornelius Tacitus," but to convince him of the fact, that they passed into the play through the limbec of Bacon's brain.



## § 2. THE HENRY VIII.

The tragedy of Henry VIII. has been supposed by some critics to have been written as early as the year 1602, but there is no evidence concerning it, nor any certain trace of its existence, before it was produced in great splendor at the Globe Theatre, on the 30th of June, 1613, when the theatre took fire, during the performance, and was burned down. Ben Jonson appears to have taken an active part in bringing out the play; and some have entertained the opinion, on internal evidence merely, that the prologue and the lines in compliment to King James were written by him and added to the old play, at this time. But there is no good ground for this supposition: on the contrary, it is far more probable that the play was entirely a new one, as Mr. White believes, and that the speech of Cranmer in praise of Elizabeth and James, as well as the scenes in which Anne Bullen, the mother of Elizabeth, is introduced in terms of high commendation, was intended to be a special compliment to the King. It was never entered, nor printed, until it appeared in the Folio of 1623. It is true, however, that, in the year 1602, the kingdom was agitated on the subject of abuses of the King's prerogative in the matter of taxes, and that there were loud complaints of oppressive exactions. The subject was debated in Parliament, and a petition of grievances was sent up to the King by the Commons. Bacon presented it, and made his speech to the King touching purveyors; in which allusion is made to the fact, that similar grievances had existed in the reign of Henry VIII., who had made "some laws or law against this kind of offenders." And in this play, the author makes Queen Katherine present to King Henry a like petition of grievances. A comparison of this speech with the second scene of the first act will scarcely leave room for doubt in the mind of the critical reader, that both proceeded from the same pen. Observe these passages, in particular:—

"Wherein it may please your majesty to vouchsafe me leave, first, to set forth unto you the dutiful and respective carriage of our proceeding; next the substance of our petition":—

"*Q. Kath.* Thank your majesty.  
That you would love yourself, and in that love  
Not unconsidered leave your honour, nor  
The dignity of your office, is the point  
Of my petition.

*K. Hen.* Lady mine, proceed."

"For there is no grievance so sensible, and so bitter unto the common subject, as this whereof we now speak. . . . The commissions they bring down are against the law, and because they know so much they will not show them. . . . For all these grievances are committed in your majesty's name."

"*Q. Kath.* I am solicited not by a few,  
And those of true condition, that your subjects  
Are in great grievance. There have been commissions  
Sent down among 'em, which have flaw'd the heart  
Of all their loyalties: wherein, although,  
My good Lord Cardinal, they vent reproaches  
Most bitterly on you, as putter-on  
Of these exactions, yet the King our master,  
Whose honour Heaven shield from soil, even he escapes not  
Language unmannerly; yea, such which breaks  
The sides of loyalty, and almost appears  
In loud rebellion."

"For instead of takers they become taxers. . . . I do set apart these commodities, wool, wool-fels, and leather, . . . because the custom upon them is *antiqua costuma*:"—["their spinners, carders, fullers, weavers."  
*Holin. III. 709*].

"*Norf.* Not almost appears;  
It doth appear; for upon these taxations,  
The clothiers all, not able to maintain  
The many to them 'longing, have put off  
The spinsters, carders, fullers, weavers, who,"—

*K. Hen.* Taxation!  
Wherein? and what taxation? My Lord Cardinal,  
You that are blamed for it alike with us,  
Know you of this taxation?"

"Again, they use a strange and unjust exaction, in causing the subjects to pay poundage of their own debts, due from your majesty unto them."

"*Q. Kath.* . . . These exactions,  
Whereof my sovereign would have note, they are

Most pestilent to the hearing; and, to bear them,  
The back is sacrifice to the load. . . .

*K. Hen.* Still exaction!  
The nature of it? In what kind, let 's know,  
Is this exaction?"

"By law they ought to show their commission, and the form of commission is by law set down."

"For the second point, most gracious sovereign, touching the quantity which they take, far above that which is answered by your majesty's use; they are the only multipliers in the world; they have the art of multiplication. For it is true, that there is no pound profit, which redoundeth to your majesty in this course, but induceth and begetteth three pounds damage upon your subjects, besides this discontent."

"*Q. Kath.* . . . . The subjects' grief  
Comes through commissions, which compel from each  
The sixth part of his substance, to be levied  
Without delay; and the pretence for this  
Is nam'd — your wars in France. This makes bold mouths:  
Tongues spit their duties out, and cold hearts freeze  
Allegiance in them. . . . .

*K. Hen.* Have you a precedent  
Of this commission? I believe not any.  
We must not rend our subjects from our laws,  
And stick them in our will. Sixth part of each?  
A trembling contribution! Why, we take  
From every tree, lop, bark, and part o' th' timber;  
And, though we leave it with a root, thus hack'd,  
The air will drink the sap. To every county  
Where this is question'd, send our letters with  
Free pardon to each man that has denied  
The force of this commission."

"Again, they take trees, which by law they cannot do; timber trees, which are the beauty, countenance, and shelter of men's houses. . . . And if a gentleman be too hard for them, while he is at home, they will watch their time, when there is but a bailiff or servant remaining, and put the axe to the root of the tree, ere ever the master can stop it": —

"We set the axe to thy usurping root." — 3 *Hen. VI., Act II. Sc. 2.*

This speech was delivered in 1604, and it is not impossible that William Shakespeare may have known something about these exactions and complaints. The resemblances are not those of plagiarism, or direct imitation: they are rather such as would naturally come from the same mind, on a kindred subject, in writings so different in



kind, and at some distance of time apart. At the same time, the marks of the lawyer's hand are almost as visible in the play as in the speech, and the style and language are exceedingly alike in both.

In like manner, a comparison of Bacon's Discourse in Praise of the Queen with Cranmer's speech in compliment to King James, in the last scene of the play, will render it next to certain that the speech came from the same source as the Discourse itself. Some sentences may be introduced, also, from other speeches and writings of nearly the same date, and also, some passages from the Sonnets, as follows:—

"Whose imperial virtues contend with the excellences of her person; both virtues contend with her fortune, and both virtue and fortune contend with her fame. . . . The other benefits of her politic, clement, and gracious government towards the subjects are without number; the state of justice good, . . . the security of peace greater than can be described by that verse:—

Tutus bos etinim rura perambulat:  
Nutrit rura Ceres, almaque Faustitas:

Or that other,—

Condit quisque diem collibus in suis.

The opulency of the peace such as,— . . . These virtues and perfections, with so great felicity, have made her the honour of her times, the admiration of the world. . . . The excellences of her person do make so sweet a wonder." . . .

["The perfection of your majesty's learning, which as a phoenix may call whole vollies of wits to follow you." (King James, in the *Advancement*.)]

"That she hath been as a star of most fortunate influence upon the age wherein she hath shined."

["The ancient fable of Atlas that stood fixed."—*Adv.*]

<p>"Cran. That mould up such a mighty piece as this is, With all the virtues that attend the good, Shall still be doubled on her:— . . . . . . . . Good grows with her. In her days every man shall eat in safety Under his own vine what he plants; and sing The merry ways of peace to all his neighbours. God shall be truly known; and those about her From her shall read the perfect ways of honour, And by those claim their greatness, not by blood. Nor shall this peace sleep with her: but as when The bird of wonder dies, the maiden phoenix,</p>	<p>All princely graces,</p>
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Her ashes new create another heir,  
 As great in admiration as herself,  
 So shall she leave her blessedness to one  
 (When heaven shall call her from this cloud of darkness)  
 Who from the sacred ashes of her honour  
 Shall star-like rise, as great in fame as she was,  
 And so stand fix'd":

["And burn the long-liv'd phoenix in her blood." — *Sonnet xix.*]

"A prince whom we hold and behold as an excellent pattern and example  
 to imitate in many her royal virtues." — *Proclamation.*

"She shall be  
 (But few now living can behold that goodness)  
 A pattern to all princes living with her,  
 And all that shall succeed."

["For beauty's pattern to succeeding men." — *Sonnet xix.*]

"I see your majesty is a star that hath benevolent aspect and gracious  
 influence upon all things that tend to a general good: —

*Astrum quo segetes gauderent frugibus, et quo  
 Duceret apricis in collibus uva colorem.*

This work, which is for the bettering of men's bread and wine, which are  
 the characters of temporal blessings and sacraments of eternal, I hope, by  
 God's holy providence, will be ripened by Caesar's star." — *Letter to King.*

"And maintain every several estate in a happy and flourishing condi-  
 tion." — *Proc.*

[Solomon's] "natural history of all verdure from the mountain cedar to  
 the moss upon the wall." — *Adv.*

"The sappy cedars tall like stately towers." — *Psalms.*

"Peace, plenty, love, truth, terror,  
 That were the servants to this chosen infant,  
 Shall then be his, and like a vine grow to him:  
 Wherever the bright sun of heaven shall shine,  
 His honour and the greatness of his name  
 Shall be, and make new nations: he shall flourish,  
 And, like a mountain cedar, reach his branches  
 To all the plains about him."

["And when from a stately cedar shall be lopped branches, which being  
 dead many years, shall after revive, be jointed to the old stock, and freshly  
 grow; then shall Posthumus end his miseries, Britain be fortunate, and  
 flourish in peace and plenty." — *Cymb., Act V. Sc. 4.*]

"Time is her best commander, which never brought forth such a prince  
 . . . No praise of magnanimity, nor of love, nor of knowledge, can inter-  
 cept her praise."

[ 'Not marble, nor the gilded monuments  
Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rhyme;  
But you shall shine more bright in these contents  
Than unswept stone besmear'd with sluttish time.

'Gainst death and all oblivious enmity  
Shall you pace forth; your praise shall find room,  
Even in the eyes of all posterity  
That wear this world out to the ending doom." — *Sonnet lv.*]

"Yea, both roses, white and red, do as well flourish in her nobility as in her beauty." . . .

"For the beauty and many graces of her presence," —

"— that which I did reserve for a garland of her honour," — . . . .

— "as he shall never cease to wonder at such a Queen."

["So all their praises are but prophesies  
Of this our time, all you prefiguring;  
And for they look'd but with divining eyes,  
They had not skill enough your worth to sing:  
For we, which now behold these present days,  
Have eyes to wonder, but lack tongues to praise." — *Sonnet cvi.*]

"Beauty and honour in her are so mingled." — *Act II. Sc. 3.*

Further, that the author had a special intent to make this play acceptable to King James, is also evident in the studiously complimentary manner in which he speaks of Anne Bullen in the several passages in which she is brought upon the scene; as for instance, in that of the maskers habited like shepherds: —

"*K. Hen.* The fairest hand I ever touch'd. O, beauty!

'Till now I never knew thee. . . . .

. . . . . My Lord Chamberlain,

Pry'thee come hither. What fair lady's that?

*Cham.* An't please your Grace, Sir Thomas Bullen's daughter, —  
The Viscount Rochford, — one of her Highness' women.

*K. Hen.* By heaven, she is a dainty one. — Sweetheart,  
I were unmannerly to take you out,  
And not to kiss you." — *Act I. Sc. 4.*

And again, thus, after he has made her his queen:

"2 *Gent.* Heaven bless thee! [*Looking on the QUEEN.*

Thou hast the sweetest face I ever look'd on. —

Sir, as I have a soul, she is an angel:

Our King has all the Indies in his arms,

And more and richer when he strains that lady:

I cannot blame his conscience." — *Act IV. Sc. 1.*



The story of the maskers habited like shepherds is taken from Holinshed, whose account is pretty closely followed in the play, but with the very notable exception, that in Holinshed there is no allusion whatever to Anne Bullen, while in the play, she makes a prominent figure in the scene; and in all these passages, her beauty and honor are the subject of particular remark, very much after the style of Bacon when speaking of Queen Elizabeth herself, in the *Felicities*, thus:—

"Now to pass to the excellences of her person: the view of them wholly, and not severally, do make so sweet a wonder, as I fear to divide them. Again nobility extracted out of the royal and virtuous line of the kings of England; yea, both roses, white and red, do as well flourish in her nobility as in her beauty. . . For the beauty and many graces of her presence, what colours are fine enough for such a portraiture?"

"To speak of her fortune, that which I did reserve for a garland of her honour; and that is, that she liveth a virgin, and hath no children: so it is that which maketh all her other virtues and acts more sacred, more august, more divine."

"As for her memory, it hath gotten such life in the mouths and hearts of men, as that envy being put out by her death, and her fame lighted, I cannot say whether the felicity of her life, or the felicity of her memory be the greater."

"Another principal thing I cast into Queen Elizabeth's felicity, was the time and period of her reign; not only for that it was long, but because it fell in that season of her life, which was most active and fittest for the swaying of a sceptre, for she was fully five and twenty years old (at which age the civil law freeth from a curator) when she came to the crown, and reigned to the seventieth year of her life; so that she never suffered the detriments of pupillage and check of an overawing power, or the inconveniences of an impotent and unwieldy old age; and old age is not without a competent portion of miseries, even to private men; but to kings, besides the common burden of years, it brings for the most part a declining in the estates they govern, and a conclusion of their lives without honour. . . Contrariwise, Queen Elizabeth's fortune was so constant and deeply rooted, that no disaster in any of her dominions accompanied her indeed declining but still able years."

And very like is the tone of the conclusion of Cranmer's prophetic speech:—

*K. Henry.*

Thou speakest wonders.

*Cran.* She shall be, to the happiness of England,  
An aged princess; many days shall see her,  
And yet no day without a deed to crown it.

Would I had known no more! but she must die,—  
 She must, the saints must have her: yet a virgin,  
 A most unspotted lily shall she pass  
 To the ground, and all the world shall mourn her."

*Act V. Sc. 4.*

Another instance may be added here of those numerous resemblances in thought and word, which, though not amounting in themselves to any absolute certainty of proof, yet strike the mind, as it were, like the sound of a voice from the world of spirits. In the History of Henry VII., Bacon speaks of Queen Katherine thus:—

"And the lady Katherine herself (a sad and religious woman), long after, when King Henry the Eighth his resolution of a divorce from her was first made known to her, used some words, that she had not offended, but it was a judgment of God, for that her former marriage was made in blood; meaning that of the Earl of Warwick."<sup>1</sup>

And thus she is represented in the play:—

"*Q. Kath.*

Alas, sir,

In what have I offended you? . . . .

*K. Hen.*

Go thy ways, Kate:

. . . . . Thou art, alone

(If thy rare qualities, sweet gentleness,

Thy meekness saint-like, wife-like government,

Obeying in commanding, and thy parts

Sovereign and pious else, would speak thee out,)

The queen of earthly queens." . . . .

*Act II. Sc. 4.*

"*Q. Kath.* Take thy lute, wench: my soul grows sad with troubles  
 Sing, and disperse them, if thou canst. Leave working."—*Act III. Sc. 1*

"*K. Hen.*

I th' progress of the business,

Ere a determinate resolution, he

(I mean the bishop) did require a respite;

Wherein he might the king his lord advertise

Whether our daughter were legitimate,

Respecting this our marriage with the dowager,

Sometime our brother's wife. . . . .

. . . . . First, methought,

I stood not in the smile of heaven; who had

Commanded nature, that my lady's womb,

If it conceived a male child by me, should

Do no more offices of life to 't than

The grave does to the dead; for her male issue

<sup>1</sup> *Works* (Boston), XII. 306.

Or died where they were made, or shortly after  
 This world had air'd them. Hence I took a thought,  
 This was a judgment on me; that my kingdom,  
 Well worthy the best heir o' th' world, should not  
 Be gladdened in 't by me."—*Act II. Sc. 4.*

This last circumstance of the judgment of God is mentioned by Holinshed; but inasmuch as other particulars, and among them, the fact of Katherine being a "saint-like," "pious," and "sad" woman, or "a sad and religious woman," are not noticed in Holinshed, there is the more reason to infer, what the whole style and manner would seem fully to warrant, that it was Bacon, rather than another, who built upon that author. Neither could Shakespeare have had any help from the History of Henry VII., nor from the Felicities of Queen Elizabeth, which were not published until after the play appeared.

Whether or not the appearance of this play had any bearing upon the expected vacancy in the Attorney-General's place, is only matter of probability; but it is certain that, during the preceding year, Bacon had written several letters to the King, plaintively urging that he had served "above a prenticehood," now "full seven years" in "one of the painfulest places" in the kingdom (that of Solicitor), and entreating his majesty's "royal promise to succeed," if he lived, "unto the other place." And he said, "I did conceive your majesty may think it rather a kind of dullness, or want of faith, than modesty, if I should not come with my pitcher to Jacob's well as others do": like the fault of Cordelia, it might be deemed "a tardiness in nature." He went so far as to suggest, that "since God had brought his own years to fifty-two, it were better for him, otherwise, then, while he had "some little reputation in the world," to give over the course he was in, and "make proof to do his majesty some honor by his pen"; and the boon prayed for had been granted "on the word of a king." As the play was not printed until 1623, it is, of course, impossible to ascertain with positive certainty,



whether anything, or how much, may have been added to it, after the date of its first appearance. Some critics have observed such differences in the style and versification of different parts of it as to raise a doubt whether it were all the work of the same author. But in this matter of versification, it may be well to remember Bacon's remark, that "some men's behaviour is like a verse, wherein every syllable is measured; how can a man comprehend great matters, that breaketh his mind too much to small observations?"<sup>1</sup> And his remarks on verse, generally, in the *De Augmentis*, may justly claim attention in any criticism of the verse of Shakespeare:—

"The ancients used hexameter for histories and eulogies; elegiac for complaints; iambic for invectives; lyric for odes and hymns. Nor have the modern poets been wanting in this wisdom, so far as their own languages are concerned. The fault has been, that some of them, out of too much zeal for antiquity, have tried to train the modern languages into the ancient measures (hexameter, elegiac, saphic, etc.); measures incompatible with the structures of the languages themselves, and no less offensive to the ear. In these things the judgment of the sense is to be preferred to the precepts of art,—as the poet says,—

Cœne fercula nostræ  
Mallet convivis quam placuisse cœcis.

And it is not art, but abuse of art, when, instead of perfecting nature, it perverts it."

Indeed, it is not improbable, that this play received some considerable additions and emendations from the matured experience of the master's hand, after his own fall from power, when he had bidden farewell to all his "greatness,"—when he had "done with such vanities" as the House of Lords, and had found, at last, "the blessedness of being little." At least, this celebrated speech of Wolsey to Cromwell is not to be found in Holinshed, from whose history the matter of the play is chiefly taken, and much of it merely turned into verse: it has been remarked, too, that a certain twang of pulpit eloquence is audible in it; and truly enough, if it be understood that the preacher was this

<sup>1</sup> Essay, lii.

same high priest of Nature, Justice, and Truth, on whom the wall had fallen, though not the greatest sinner in Israel, and who now confessed himself to have been "humbled as a Christian, but not dejected as a worldling": —

"Say, Wolsey, that once trod the ways of glory,  
And sounded all the depths and shoals of honour,  
Found thee a way, out of his wrack, to rise in;  
A sure and safe one, though thy master miss'd it.  
Mark but my fall, and that that ruin'd me.  
Cromwell, I charge thee, fling away ambition:  
By that sin fell the angels; how can man, then,  
The image of his Maker, hope to win by 't?  
Love thyself last: cherish those hearts that hate thee.  
Corruption wins not more than honesty.  
Still in thy right hand carry gentle peace,  
To silence envious tongues: be just and fear not.  
Let all the ends thou aim'st at be thy country's,  
Thy God's, and Truth's: then, if thou fall'st, O Cromwell!  
Thou fall'st a blessed martyr." — *Act III. Sc. 2.*

And this conclusion sounds very much like the Essay on Truth: —

"Certainly, it is heaven upon earth, to have a man's mind move in charity, rest in Providence, and turn upon the poles of Truth."

At any rate, it is a most positive and indubitable fact, that on the fifth of September, 1621, whether he were then engaged upon a revision of these plays or not, he writes a letter to the King, from his retreat at Gorhambury, to which he appends a remarkable postscript, by which it appears that the similarity of his own case to that of the fallen Cardinal in the play had very forcibly come to his mind; and he seems to have been struggling with his own conscience to avert the parallel, thus: —

"Cardinal Wolsey said that if he had pleased God as he pleased the king he had not been ruined. My conscience saith no such thing; for I know not but in serving you, I served God in one. But it may be if I had pleased God, as I had pleased you, it would have been better for me." <sup>1</sup>

The play reads thus: —

<sup>1</sup> *Letter to the King, Works* (Mont.), XII. 411; *Works* (Philad.), III. 136

"Wol.                      O Cromwell, Cromwell!  
 Had I but serv'd my God with half the zeal  
 I serv'd my King, he would not in mine age  
 Have left me naked to mine enemies." — *Act III. Sc. 2.*

It is barely possible, here, that Bacon may have remembered Shakespeare's play, though it had never been printed, or that William Shakespeare, as well as Bacon, may have followed the same historical account of Cardinal Wolsey, in Holinshed, Hall, or Stowe; but in the brevity and peculiar turn of the expression, and in the use of the verb *to have* and the word *but*, the manner of Bacon may be distinctly recognized in the play. Again, Bacon uses the expression "*if he had pleased God as he pleased the King he had not been ruined.*" The word *ruined* is not in Holinshed, but it appears in the preceding line of the play:—

"Mark but my fall, and that that ruin'd me."

It is evident that Holinshed had been consulted, and that his account had, in general, been followed in the play; but it is also clear, that some other author, probably Cavendish, from whom all the later historians drew their materials, had also been consulted. Cavendish's "*Life and Death of Thomas Woolsey,*" written prior to 1557, remained in MSS. until 1641;<sup>1</sup> but copies of it had been deposited in various libraries at Oxford, Cambridge, and London. Hall and Holinshed drew from the MSS., and John Stowe had borrowed a copy. The story of Anne Bullen must have been derived from Cavendish, or from some other copier than Holinshed; but the play varies considerably from Cavendish, in the scenes concerning Anne Bullen; as for instance, in the scene of the maskers, Wolsey makes a mistake and selects Sir Edward Neville for the king, while in the play, he makes a good hit, and finds the king. It is certain that Bacon's studies for his Histories began at an early date, and must have made him familiar with these historians; and it is highly probable, if not quite certain, that he

<sup>1</sup> *Harleian Misc.*, V. 123.



would have an opportunity to consult one of the MSS. copies of Cavendish. Holinshed's statement of this saying of the dying Cardinal, drawn from Cavendish, is as follows:—

"Sir, (quoth he,) I tarrie but the pleasure of God to render up my poore soule into his hands. I see the matter, how it is framed: but if I had served God as diligentlie as I have doone the King, he would not have given me over in my greie haire: but it is the just reward that I must receive for the diligent pains and studie that I have had to do him service, not regarding my service to God, but onlie to satisfie his pleasure."<sup>1</sup>

The word *pleased* is not used, nor is anything said, in the play, about the king's "pleasure:" while in the letter of Bacon, *pleased* is the leading word. This shows that Bacon wrote rather from his remembrance of Holinshed than of the play. At the same time, the word *served* is also used by Bacon as in Holinshed, and it is made the leading word in the play, as more suitable than *pleased* for the few lines of verse which were required. And this tends strongly to the conclusion, that the saying passed into the play through the mind of Bacon. Furthermore, this word *please* is much in use, in the same manner, both in Bacon and the plays; as for instance, in the *Julius Cæsar*, thus:—

"*Cass.* I know not what you mean by that; but I am sure, Cæsar fell down. If the tag-rag people did not clap him and hiss him, according as he pleased and displeased them, as they used to do the Players in the theatre, I am no true man."—*Act I. Sc. 2.*

And in the "Christian Paradoxes" of Bacon, we have this:—

"He knoweth if he please man, he cannot be the servant of Christ; yet, for Christ's sake, he pleaseth all men in all things."

In like manner, the story of King Henry the Sixth's prophecy, about young Henry Earl of Richmond, passes from Holinshed into the play of Henry VI., pretty certainly through the head of Bacon; for, in the *Essay of Prophecies*, he says, "Henry the Sixth of England said of Henry the Seventh, when he was a lad, and gave him water, *This is the lad that shall enjoy the crown for which we strive.*"

<sup>1</sup> *Chron. of Eng.* (Lond. 1808), III. 755.

And it is thus related in the play :—

*K. Hen.* My Lord of Somerset, what youth is that,  
Of whom you seem to have so tender care?

*Som.* My liege, it is young Henry, Earl of Richmond.

*K. Hen.* Come hither, England's hope: if secret powers  
[*Lays his hand on his head.*

Suggest but truth to my divining thoughts,

*This pretty lad will prove our country's bliss.*

His looks are full of peaceful majesty;

His head by nature fram'd to wear a crown,

His hand to wield a sceptre; and himself

Likely, in time, to bless a regal throne."

3 *Hen. VI.*, Act IV. Sc. 6.

### § 3. JULIUS CÆSAR.

As we have seen, there is satisfactory evidence, that Bacon had made a special study of the life and times of Julius Cæsar. The play of this name was not printed until it appeared in the Folio, but it seems to have been written about the year 1607, just when Bacon was engaged upon his *Characters of Julius and Augustus Cæsar* (written in Latin), in which allusion is made to Cæsar's ambition for a crown, in these words of the translation :—

"For aiming at a real power, he was content to pass by all vain pomp and outward shows of power throughout his whole life; till at the last, whether high-flown with the continual exercise of power, or corrupted with flatteries, he affected the ensigns of power (the style and diadem of a king), which was the bait which wrought his overthrow."

The *Advancement* contains a critical account of the merits of Julius Cæsar as a writer, and also this passage, which may be compared with the following lines of the play :—

"Cæsar did extremely affect the name of king; and some were set on, as he passed by, in popular acclamation to salute him king; whereupon finding the cry weak and poor, he put it off thus, in a kind of jest, as if they had mistaken his surname: *Non rex sum, sed Cæsar.*"

The play reads thus :—

*Casca.* Why, there was a crown offered him: and, being offered him he put it by with the back of his hand, thus; and then the people fell shouting.

*Bru.* What was the second noise for?

*Cas.* Why, for that too.

*Cas.* They shouted thrice: what was the last cry for?

*Cas.* Why for that too.

*Bru.* Was the crown offered him thrice?

*Cas.* Ay, marry, was 't, and he put it by thrice, every time gentler than the other; and at every putting by mine honest neighbors shouted.

*Cas.* Who offered him the crown?

*Cas.* Why, Antony.

*Bru.* Tell us the manner of it, gentle Casca.

*Cas.* I can as well be hanged as tell the manner of it: it was mere foolery, I did not mark it. I saw Mark Anthony offer him a crown:—yet 't was not a crown neither, 't was one of these coronets;—and, as I told you, he put it by once; but for all that, to my thinking, he would fain have had it. Then he offered it to him again; then he put it by again; but, to my thinking, he was very loath to lay his fingers off it. And then he offered it the third time; he put it the third time by: and still as he refused it, the rabblement shouted, and clapped their chapped hands, and threw up their sweaty night-caps, and uttered such a deal of stinking breath, because Cæsar refused the crown, that it had almost choked Cæsar; for he swooned, and fell down at it. . . . .

*Bru.* What said he when he came unto himself?

*Cas.* Marry, before he fell down, when he perceived the common herd was glad he refused the crown, he plucked me ope his doublet, and offered them his throat to cut. . . . . When he came to himself again, he said, if he had done, or said, anything amiss, he desired their worships to think it was his infirmity. . . . .

*Cas.* . . . . I will this night,  
In several hands, in at his windows throw,  
As if they came from several citizens,  
Writings, all tending to the great opinion  
That Rome holds of his name; wherein obscurely  
Cæsar's ambition shall be glanced at." — *Act I. Sc. 2.*

Here, it is not possible that Bacon could have followed Shakespeare, the Advancement being older than the play; but, on the other hand, it is possible, so far as the date is concerned, that Shakespeare may have seen the Advancement as well as Plutarch's Antony (in North's translation<sup>1</sup>), from which some part of the story seems to have been taken. But the play follows the ideas of Bacon rather

<sup>1</sup> *Lives of Noble Grecians and Romans*, translated out of French into English by Thomas North, Knight (dedicated to Q. Eliz. 16 Jan. 1579). London ed. 1631, p. 917.



than those of Plutarch, and adopts the very peculiarities of Bacon's expressions, wherein they differ from North's Plutarch; as, for instance, in these: "*he put it by with the back of his hand, thus,*" in the play, and "*he put it off thus,*" in Bacon; "*what was that last cry for?*" and "*finding the cry weak and poor*"; "*it was mere foolery*" and "*in a kind of jest*"; "*he was very loath to lay his fingers off it,*" and "*he put it off thus*"; while these particular expressions are not used in North's Plutarch.

Again, North's Plutarch speaks of "a laurell crowne" having "a royal band or diademe wreathed about it, which in old time was the ancient marke and token of a king"; in the play, it is called "a crown," or "one of these coronets," but never a diadem; while in Bacon, it is "the style and diadem of a king": whence it would seem clear that Bacon followed Plutarch rather than the play.

Again, the phrase "*tell us the manner of it*" finds a repetition in this from Bacon, "*the bed we call a hot bed, and the manner of it is this.*" Casca can "as well be hanged as tell the manner of it"; and then, they "*uttered such a deal of stinking breath,*" also not in Plutarch; which sounds very much like Bacon's saying of the crowd and throng that attended the procession when he took his seat in Chancery, that "*there was much ado and a great deal of world, . . . . hell to me, or purgatory, at least.*"

Indeed, the whole style and manner of the scene, and the thought, expression, language, and manner of the whole play, are so decidedly Baconian, that it is scarcely possible to doubt, either that the story of Plutarch passed through his pen into this scene, or that the play was written by him; a conclusion that is especially confirmed by the purely classical character of the piece, and by the consideration that William Shakespeare could have had but little pretensions to learning and skill in that kind. But if there be a lingering doubt in any mind, it must certainly be removed by a comparison of these further passages from the

Essay of Friendship (first printed in 1612) with the second act of the play: —

"With Julius Cæsar, Decimus Brutus had obtained that interest, as he set him down in his testament for heir in remainder after his nephew. And this was the man that had power with him to draw him forth to his death. For when Cæsar would have discharged the Senate, in regard of some ill presages, and especially a dream of Calpurnia; this man lifted him gently by the arm out of his chair, telling him he hoped he would not dismiss the Senate till his wife had dreamt a better dream."

*Cæs.* But it is doubtful yet  
Whether Cæsar will come forth to-day, or no;  
For he is superstitious grown of late,  
Quite from the main opinion he held once  
Of fantasy, of dreams, and ceremonies.  
It may be, these apparent prodigies,  
The unaccustom'd terror of this night,  
And the persuasion of his augurers,  
May hold him from the Capitol to-day.  
*Dec.* Never fear that: If he be so resolv'd,  
I can o'ersway him. . . .  
Let me work;  
For I can give his humour the true bent;  
And I will bring him to the Capitol." — *Act II. Sc. 1.*

*Cæs.* The cause is in my will; I will not come:  
That is enough to satisfy the Senate;  
But, for your private satisfaction,  
Because I love you, I will let you know.  
Calpurnia here, my wife, stays me at home:  
She dreamt to-night she saw my statue,  
Which, like a fountain with a hundred spouts,  
Did run pure blood; and many lusty Romans  
Came smiling, and did bathe their hands in it.  
And these does she apply for warnings and portents,  
And evils imminent; and on her knee  
Hath begg'd that I will stay at home to-day.

*Dec.* This dream is all amiss interpreted:  
It was a vision, fair and fortunate.  
Your statue spouting blood in many pipes,  
In which so many smiling Romans bath'd,  
Signifies that from you great Rome shall suck  
Reviving blood: and that great men shall press  
For tinctures, stains, relics, and cognizance:  
This by Calpurnia's dream is signified.

*Cæs.* And this way you have well expounded it.

*Dec.* I have, when you have heard what I can say:  
 And know it now. The Senate have concluded  
 To give this day a crown to mighty Cæsar:  
 If you shall send them word you will not come,  
 Their minds may change. Besides, it were a mock  
 Apt to be render'd, for some one to say,  
 'Break up the Senate till another time,  
 When Cæsar's wife shall meet with better dreams.' "

*Act II. Sc. 2.*

The Essay continues :—

"And it seemeth his favor was so great, as Antonius in a letter which is recited *verbatim* in one of Cicero's Philippics, calleth him *venefica, witch*, as if he had enchanted Cæsar. . . . The like or more was between Septimius Severus and Plautianus. For he forced his eldest son to marry the daughter of Plautianus; and would often maintain Plautianus in doing affronts to his son; and did write also in a letter to the Senate, by these words : *I love the man so well, as I wish he may over-live me.*"

And the same thing appears in the play thus :—

"*Cas.* Decius, well urg'd. I think it is not meet,  
 Mark Antony, so well belov'd of Cæsar,  
 Should outlive Cæsar." — *Act II. Sc. 1.*

#### § 4. THE SOOTHSAYER.

In the Natural History (*Sylva Sylvarum*), Bacon goes into some curious investigations of "the force of imagination," and of the means whereby one mind may be affected by another through the imagination; and, in the course of the work, he gives some illustrations of his experiments "touching the emission of immateriate virtues from the minds and spirits of men," as in jugglers, soothsayers, witches, and the like.

He begins by saying that "imagination is of three kinds: the first joined with belief of that which is to come"; and under this head he proceeds thus: "The problem therefore is, whether a man constantly and strongly believing that such a thing shall be, . . . it doth help anything to the effecting of the thing itself. And here again one must warily distinguish; for it is not meant, as hath been partly said before, that it should help by making a man more stout, or



more industrious, in which kind a constant belief doth much, but merely by a secret operation, or binding, or changing the spirit of another; . . . . for whatsoever a man imagineth doubtingly, or with fear, must needs do hurt, if imagination hath any power at all." And of all this we have an exemplification in the "Julius Cæsar," where Cæsar bids the soothsayer come forward and repeat his warning, confronting him face to face, as if to try the courage and faith of the soothsayer himself in his own prophecy, thus :—

*"Sooth. Cæsar!*

*Cæs. Ha! Who calls?*

*Cæsa. Bid every noise be still. Peace yet again!*

*[Music ceases.]*

*Cæs. Who is it in the press that calls on me?*

*I hear a tongue, shriller than all the music,*

*Cry, Cæsar! Speak: Cæsar is turn'd to hear.*

*Sooth. Beware the ides of March.*

*Cæs. What man is that?*

*Bru. A soothsayer bids you beware the ides of March.*

*Cæs. Set him before me; let me see his face.*

*Cæsa. Fellow, come from the throng: look upon Cæsar.*

*Cæs. What say'st thou to me now? Speak once again.*

*Sooth. Beware the ides of March.*

*Cæs. He is a dreamer; let us leave him:—pass."*

*Act I. Sc. 2.*

The resemblance here might appear to be somewhat far-fetched, if it were not confirmed by the more direct allusion, and more explicit identity, afforded in the play of Antony and Cleopatra, in reference to this same overmastering spirit and another soothsayer. In the Natural History (not printed until after his death), he tells the story of Cleopatra's soothsayer, thus :—

"940. There was an Egyptian soothsayer, that made Antonius believe that his genius (which otherwise was brave and confident) was, in the presence of Octavianus Cæsar, poor and cowardly; and therefore, he advised him to absent himself as much as he could and remove far from him. This soothsayer was thought to be suborned by Cleopatra, to make him live in Egypt, and other remote places from Rome. Howsoever, the consent of a predominant or mastering spirit of one man over another, is ancient, and received still, even in vulgar opinion."

And again, in the *De Augmentis*, he speaks of "those ronceits (now become as it were popular) of the mastering spirit, of men unlucky and ill-omened, of the glances of love, envy, and the like."

And the story reappears in the play, thus : —

*Ant.* Now, sirrah: you do wish yourself in Egypt?

*Sooth.* Would I had never come from thence, nor you thither!

*Ant.* If you can, your reason?

*Sooth.* I see it in my motion, have it not in my tongue: but yet hie you again to Egypt.

*Ant.* Say to me, whose fortunes shall rise higher, Cæsar's or mine?

*Sooth.* Cæsar's.

Therefore, O Antony! stay not by his side:

Thy daemon, that's thy spirit which keeps thee, is

Noble, courageous, high, unmatchable,

Where Cæsar is not; but near him, thy angel

Becomes a fear, as being o'erpower'd: therefore,

Make space enough between you.

*Ant.* Speak this no more.

*Sooth.* To none but thee; no more, but when to thee.

If thou dost play with him at any game,

Thou 'rt sure to lose; and, of that natural luck,

He beats thee 'gainst the odds: thy lustre thickens,

When he shines by. I say again, thy spirit

Is all afraid to govern thee near him.

But, he away, 't is noble.

*Ant.* Get thee gone." — *Act II. Sc. 3.*

The "Antony and Cleopatra," first printed in the Folio, was entered at Stationers' Hall in 1608, and was most probably written not long before. Of course, Shakespeare could not have borrowed this story from Bacon. There is more in Bacon's story than is said by the soothsayer in the play; and this proves that Bacon drew from some other source than the play. Bacon states that this soothsayer was thought to have been suborned by Cleopatra to make Antony live in Egypt, but this circumstance is not mentioned in the play. A similar story was to be found in North's translation of Plutarch's life of Antony, which Shakespeare may have seen as well as Bacon; and it is true that some parts of it are very closely followed in the

play. There is little doubt that the writer had read Plutarch. But Plutarch makes the soothsayer a member of the household of Antony at Rome: "With Antonius there was a Soothsayer or Astronomer of Egypt, that could cast a figure, and judge of men's nativities, to tell them what should happen to them."<sup>1</sup> But the play, like Bacon's story, makes him not only an Egyptian, but one of the household of Cleopatra; and in the play, he is sent by Cleopatra as one of her numerous messengers from Egypt to Antony at Rome to induce him to return to Egypt; and in this he is successful; all which is in exact keeping with Bacon's statement that he was thought to be suborned by Cleopatra to make Antony live in Egypt; but of this there is not the least hint in Plutarch. All this goes strongly to show, that this story, together with the doctrine of a predominant or mastering spirit of one man over another, went into the play through the Baconian strainer; for it is next to incredible, that both Bacon and Shakespeare should make the same variations upon the common original.

Again, in this same Natural History, considering of the substances that produce death with least pain, he records his conclusions upon the poison of the asp, in these words:—

"643. The death that is most without pain, hath been noted to be upon the taking of the potion of hemlock; which in humanity was the form of execution of capital offenders in Athens. The poison of the asp, that Cleopatra used, hath some affinity with it. The cause is, for that the torments of death are chiefly raised by the strife of the spirits; and these vapours quench the spirits by degrees; like to the death of an extreme old man. I conceive it is less painful than opium, because opium hath parts of heat mixed."

And, that the writer of this play had the same scientific knowledge and the same opinions of the quality and effect of this poison, will be seen in these lines of the play:—

"*Cleo.* Hast thou the pretty worm of Nilus there,  
That kills and pains not?"

<sup>1</sup> North's *Plutarch*, 926.



*Clown.* Truly I have him; but I would not be the party that should desire you to touch him, for his biting is immortal: those that do die of it, do seldom or never recover.

*Cleo.* Remember'st thou any that have died on't?

*Cleo.* Very many, men and women too. I heard of one of them no longer than yesterday; a very honest woman, but something given to lie, — as a woman should not do, but in the way of honesty; — how she died of the biting of it, what pain she felt. Truly, she makes a very good report o' the worm.

*Cleo.* Farewell, kind Charmian; — Iras, long farewell.

[*Kisses them.* IRAS falls and dies.

Have I the aspick in my lips? Dost fall?

If thou and nature can so gently part,

The stroke of death is as a lover's pinch,

Which hurts, and is desir'd. . . .

. . . . Come, thou mortal wretch,

[*To the asp, which she applies to her breast.*

With thy sharp teeth this knot intricate

Of life at once untie: poor venomous fool,

Be angry, and despatch. . . .

Peace, peace!

Dost thou not see my baby at my breast,

That sucks the nurse asleep?

*Char.* O, break! O, break!

*Cleo.* As sweet as balm, as soft as air, as gentle, —

O, Antony! — Nay, I will take thee too. — [*Another asp.*

What should I stay — [*Falls and dies.*

*Char.* In this wide world? — So, fare thee well. —

*Guard.* This is an aspick's trail; and these fig-leaves  
Have slime upon them, such as the aspick leaves  
Upon the caves of Nile.

*Caes.* Most probable,

That so she died; for her physician tells me,

She hath pursued conclusions infinite

Of easy ways to die." — *Act V. Sc. 2.*

And there is no doubt, that she was somehow thoroughly instructed in natural history, and well acquainted with "the death that is most without pain," or as gentle "as a lover's pinch," and those "vapours" that "quench the spirits by degrees, like to the death of an extreme old man"; nor that the great Magician himself had "pursued conclusions infinite of easy ways to die."

Though the Natural History was chiefly composed during the last five years of his life, yet we know that he had been collecting materials for it for many years before ; and it is very probable that he was making notes on the poisonous qualities of plants and animals, and on easy ways to die, about the same time that he was engaged in writing this play, and so the asp, that Cleopatra used, is noted with the hemlock, and finds its way into the same section of this work, in connection with the same subject, "the death that is most without pain." This inference is still further confirmed by the actual out-cropping, in rather a singular manner, of this same word *vapour*, a little above, in the same scene of the play, thus : —

"*Cleo.* . . . . — in their thick breaths,  
Rank of gross diet, shall we be enclouded,  
And forc'd to drink their vapour."

Bacon, as we know, towards the close of his career, collected and digested the results of his observations and studies, through many years, into a scientific history of Life and Death ; and in such a man we may find a comprehensible source of the natural science of these plays, without resorting to the childish and ridiculous notion that a born genius can see through nature at one glance.

#### § 5. MACBETH. — VISIONS.

The tragedy of Macbeth was certainly written between 1605 and 1610. The first notice that we have of it is, that it was performed at the Globe in April 1610 ; and there are some reasons to conjecture that it was written about the year 1607, when Bacon was made Solicitor-General. It may have followed the "Antony and Cleopatra" : at any rate, we find in it an allusion to this same soothsayer, together with some further illustration of the same conceit of a predominant or mastering spirit of one man over another, thus : —

"*Macb.* Our fears in Banquo  
Stick deep; and in his royalty of nature  
Reigns that which would be fear'd: 'T is much he dares;  
And, to that dauntless temper of his mind,  
He hath a wisdom that doth guide his valour  
To act in safety. There is none but he,  
Whose being I do fear; and under him  
My genius is rebuk'd, as, it is said,  
Mark Antony's was by Cæsar." — *Act III. Sc. 1.*

And in the lines immediately following these, the same conceit leads to a like use of this same word *predominant*, thus: —

"*Macb.* Do you find  
Your patience so predominant in your nature  
That you can let this go?"

The same form of expression occurs again in what Bacon writes concerning Henry VII. and his Queen: "But his aversion towards the house of York was so predominant in him, as it found place not only in his wars and counsels, but in his chamber and bed"; and again, in this same History, he uses the expression, "and were predominant in the King's nature and mind."

The incantation and vaticination of the witches, and the prophetic visions also, in this play, bear unmistakable marks of Bacon's inquiries into the natural history of charms and witches, the poisonous plants and animals connected with them in the popular superstitions, and the manner in which the imagination is operated upon by immateriate virtues. Speaking of his third kind of imagination, that which is "of things not present as if they were present," and of the power of it upon the spirits of men, he says: —

"There be three means to fortify belief: the first is experience; the second is reason; and the third is authority; . . . for authority, it is of two kinds, belief in an art, and belief in a man. Therefore, if a man believes in astrology, . . . or believe in natural magic, and that a ring with such a stone, or such a piece of living creature carried, will do good, it may help his imagination. . . . And such are, for the most part, all witches and superstitious persons, whose beliefs, tied to their teachers and traditions, are ne



whit controlled either by reason or experience. Therefore if there be any operation upon bodies in absence by nature, it is like to be conveyed from man to man as fame is; as if a witch, by imagination, should hurt any afar off, it cannot be naturally; but by working upon the spirit of some that cometh to the witch." — *Nat. Hist.* c. x.

Accordingly, at the close of the first witch scene, Macbeth comes to the witches, thus : —

" 3 Witch. A drum! a drum!  
Macbeth doth come." — *Act I. Sc. 3.*

And at the close of the great incantation of the fourth act, thus : —

" 2 Witch. By the pricking of my thumbs,  
Something wicked this way comes. —  
Open locks, whoever knocks. [*Enter MACBETH.*  
" *Hec.* . . . Get you gone,  
And at the pit of Acheron  
Meet me i' th' morning: thither he  
Will come to know his destiny." — *Act III. Sc. 5.*

And in the apparition scene immediately following, Bacon's ideas of the nature of prophecy are repeated almost in his own language. The Intellectual Globe must have been written not far from the time when the "Macbeth" first appeared, though not published until afterwards; and it is manifest that Shakespeare could have derived nothing from this work. In the first chapter, he defines his notions of the three several streams of history, poesy, and philosophy, and after giving his meaning of poesy as nothing else but "feigned history," he proceeds to distinguish history from prophecy in the following passage which may be compared with the play : —

" Wherefore we assert that history itself either consists of sacred history, or divine precepts and doctrines, which are, so to speak, an every day philosophy. And that part which seems to fall without this division, prophecy, is itself a species of history, with the prerogative of deity stamped upon it of making all times one duration, so that the narrative may anticipate the fact; thus also the mode of promulgating vaticination by vision, or the heavenly doctrines by parables, partakes of the nature of poetry " : —

" *War.* There is a history in all men's lives,  
Figuring the nature of the times deceas'd;

The which observed, a man may prophecy,  
 With a near aim, of the main chance of things  
 As yet not come to life, which in their seeds,  
 And weak beginnings, lie intresured.  
 Such things become the hatch and brood of time,  
 And, by the necessary firm of this,  
 King Richard might create a perfect guess."

2 Hen. IV. Act III. Sc. 1.

And again, in the Advancement, he says: "Prophecy is but divine history; which hath that prerogative over human, as the narration may be before the fact as well as after." We may note also that this word *anticipate* re-appears in the "Precursors or Anticipations of the Second Philosophy." And in the play, this doctrine of prophecy is introduced in these lines: —

"*Macb.* He chid the sisters,  
 When first they put the name of King upon me,  
 And bade them speak to him; then, prophet-like,  
 They hail'd him father to a line of kings.  
 Upon my head they placed a fruitless crown,  
 And put a barren sceptre in my gripe,  
 Thence to be wrench'd with an unlineal hand,  
 No son of mine succeeding." — Act III. Sc. 1.

The fourth act opens with the witches' incantation, which is immediately followed by the Vision of future history, with the prerogative of Deity stamped upon it of making all times one duration, thus: —

"Act IV. Sc. 1. — A Dark Cave.

[*Thunder. An Apparition of an armed Head rises.*]

*Macb.* Tell me thou unknown power, —

1 *Witch.* He knows thy thought:  
 Hear his speech, but say thou naught."

The apparitions then rise in succession and deliver their prophetic speeches, when the play proceeds: —

"*Macb.* . . . Tell me, (if your art  
 Can tell so much,) shall Banquo's issue ever  
 Reign in this kingdom?"

*Witch.* Seek to know no more.

*Macb.* I will be satisfied: deny me this,

And an eternal curse fall on you! Let me know —

*All.* Show his eyes, and grieve his heart!  
Come like shadows, so depart.

[*Eight Kings now appear in order.*]

*Macb.* What! will the line stretch out to the crack of doom?  
Another yet? — A seventh? — I'll see no more: —  
And yet the eighth appears, who bears a glass,  
Which shows me many more; and some I see,  
That two-fold balls and treble sceptres carry.  
Horrible sight! — Ay, now, I see, 't is true;  
For the blood-bolter'd Banquo smiles upon me,  
And points at them for his. — What! is this so?"

*Macb.* Time, thou *anticipat'st* my dread exploits:  
The flighty purpose never is o'ertook,  
Unless the deed go with it."

Surely, this poetry was written to illustrate this philosophy, and that, too, by one who understood, that it belonged to the nature of dramatic poetry to illustrate it very well; for, as Sir Philip Sidney had said, "the Poet is the Monarch of all sciences": at bottom, the Philosopher and the Poet are one.

In the tragedy of Henry VIII., there is another vision, in which another of this author's modes of affecting the imagination is exhibited and equally well illustrated. Compare the following passages: —

"955. The body passive and to be wrought upon, (I mean not of the imaginant,) is better wrought upon, as hath been partly touched, at some times than others: as if you should prescribe a servant about a sick person, whom you have possessed, that his master shall recover, when his master is fast asleep, to use such a root, or such a root. For imagination is like to work better upon sleeping men than men awake; as we shall show when we handle dreams. . . . It is certain that potions, or things taken into the body; incenses and perfumes taken at the nostrils; and ointments of some parts do naturally work upon the imagination of him that taketh them." . . . The second is the exposition of natural dreams, which discovereth the state of the body by the imaginations of the mind." — *Nat. Hist.* 514.

"Act IV. Sc. 2. — Kimbolton.

[*Enter KATHERINE, Dowager, sick; led between GRIFFITH and PATIENCE*]

*Grif.* How does your Grace?

*Kath.* O, Griffith, sick to death: . . .

*Patience*, be near me still; and set me lower:



I have not long to trouble thee. — Good Griffith,  
Cause the musicians play me that sad note  
I nam'd my knell, whilst I sit meditating  
On that celestial harmony I go to.

[*Sad and solemn music.*]

*Grif.* She is asleep: Good wench, let 's sit down quiet,  
For fear we wake her: — Softly, gentle Patience.

*The Vision.* Enter, solemnly tripping one after another, six Personages, clad in white robes, wearing on their heads garlands of bays, and golden vizors on their faces; branches of bays, or palm, in their hands. They first congregate unto her, and then dance; and at certain changes, the first two hold a spare garland over her head; at which the other four make reverend courtesies; then, the two that held the garland deliver the same to the other next two, who observe the same order in their changes, and holding the garland over her head. Which done, they deliver the same garland to the last two, who likewise observe the same order; at which (as it were by inspiration) she makes in her sleep signs of rejoicing, and holdeth up her hands to Heaven: and so in their dancing, they vanish, carrying the garland with them. The music continues.

*Kath.* Spirits of peace, where are ye? Are ye all gone,  
And leave me here in wretchedness behind ye?

*Grif.* Madam, we are here.

*Kath.* It is not you I call for.

Saw ye none enter since I slept?

*Grif.* None, madam,

*Kath.* No? Saw you not, even now, a blessed troop  
Invite me to a banquet, whose bright faces  
Cast thousand beams upon me like the sun?  
They promis'd me eternal happiness,  
And brought me garlands, Griffith, which I feel  
I am not worthy yet to wear: I shall  
Assuredly.

*Grif.* I am most joyful, madam, such good dreams  
Possess your fancy."

And so, the end turns upon dreams as in the extracts from Bacon. Here, as in many other instances, the similitude is more in the idea and matter than in the language; and that similitude is just such as would be most likely to occur, if we suppose the author to have been engaged, at the same time, upon a scientific study of the same subjects. There should be strong resemblance without absolute identity; and that we have, in the sick person, attended by a servant, in that weak and passive state of body and somewhat exalted mind, dwelling on the celestial harmonies, the vision

producing 'he effect on the imagination by the influence of the garlands and dancing, perfumes taken at the nostrils, and the tripping performances, as carefully directed; not roots, this time, but branches of bays, or palm; the imagination more easily worked upon, sleeping than awake; and the conclusion, in both cases, running upon dreams that possess the fancy.

It is certain that Bacon was at work upon this portion of the great Instauration, and kindred topics were in his mind, during the period in which these particular plays were produced. And it may be said to be true, generally, (what is one of the most convincing kinds of proof,) that the most striking parallel passages found in any prose work of his, the date of which can be approximately fixed, are more especially confined to one or two plays, which must have been written, and were, in fact, produced, at about the same time at which that particular work may have been, or was in fact written, though not published until some years afterwards, as is true in some instances.

Still another example may be cited from the "Macbeth." Compare the words and topics of the following sentences, which are to be found within the compass of two or three pages in the Natural History, touching "the secret virtue of sympathy and antipathy,"<sup>1</sup> with the witches' incantation in the opening of the fourth act, thus:—

"There be many things that work upon the spirits of man by secret sympathy and antipathy: . . . tail of a dog or cat; . . . the flesh of the hedge-hog is said to be a great drier":—

<sup>1</sup> *1 Witch.* Thrice the brinded cat hath mew'd.

<sup>2</sup> *W.* Thrice; and once the hedge-pig whin'd.

<sup>3</sup> *W.* Harpier cries, — 'T is time, 't is time."

"The blood-stone good for bleeding at the nose, by astriction and cooling of the spirits. Query, if the stone taken out of the toad's head be not of the like virtue; for the toad loveth shade and coolness:—for that being poisonous themselves, they draw the venom to them from the spirits":—

<sup>1</sup> *Nat. Hist.*, § 964-998; *Works*, (Boston), V. 149-157.

"1 W. Round about the cauldron go:  
In the poison'd entrails throw. —  
Toad, that under coldish stone,  
Days and nights hast thirty-one  
Swelter'd venom sleeping got,  
Boil thou first i' th' charmed pot.

*All.* Double, double toil and trouble;  
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble."

"The writers of natural magic commend the wearing of the spoil of a snake; . . . The writers of natural magic do attribute much to the virtues that come from the parts of living creatures; so as they be taken from them, the creatures remaining still alive; as if the creatures still living did infuse some immaterial virtue and vigour into the part severed": —

"2 W. Fillet of a fenny snake  
In the cauldron boil and bake:  
Eye of newt, and toe of frog,  
Wool of bat, and tongue of dog,  
Adder's fork, and blind-worm's sting,  
Lizard's leg, and ewet's wing,  
For a charm of powerful trouble,  
Like a hell-broth, boil and bubble.  
*All.* Double, double toil and trouble;  
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble."

"The trochisk of vipers, — . . . the guts or skin of a wolf, a beast of great edacity; — Mummy hath great force in staunching of blood; — . . . the white of an egg, or blood, mingled with salt water, — . . . for all life hath a sympathy with salt, — . . . rings of sea-horse teeth, — . . . henbane, hemlock. — The ointment that witches use is reported to be made of the fat of children digged out of their graves, — . . . the moss upon the skull of a dead man unburied. — So to procure easy travails of women, . . . the toad-stone likewise helpeth."

"Pius Quintus, at the very time when that memorable victory was won by the Christians against the Turks, at the naval battle of Lepanto, being then hearing of causes in the consistory, brake off suddenly, and said to those about him, *It is now more time we should give thanks to God for the great victory he has granted us against the Turks*: it is true that victory had a sympathy with his spirit; for it was merely his work to conclude that league. It may be that revelation was divine: but what shall we say then to a number of examples amongst the Grecians and Romans? where the people being in theatres at plays, have had news of victories and overthrows some few days before any messenger could come." — *Essay*.

"3 W. Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf;  
Witches' mummy; maw and gulf  
Of the ravin'd salt-sea shark;  
Root of hemlock, digg'd i' th' dark;



Liver of blaspheming Jew;  
 Gall of goat, and slips of yew  
 Sliver'd in the moon's eclipse:  
 Nose of Turk, and Tartar's lips;  
 Finger of birth-strangled babe  
 Ditch-deliver'd by a drab,  
 Make the gruel thick and slab:  
 Add thereto a tiger's chaudron,  
 For the ingredients of our cauldron.  
*All.* Double, double toil and trouble;  
 Fire burn, and cauldron bubble."

"The heart of an ape is said to make dreams also. . . . The skin of a sheep devoured by a wolf moveth itching; . . . by working upon the spirit of some that cometh to the witch":—

"2 *W.* Cool it with a baboon's blood,  
 Then the charm is firm and good.

2 *W.* By the pricking of my thumbs,  
 Something wicked this way comes:—  
 Open locks, whoever knocks.

[*Enter MACBETH.*"]

So, in the "As You Like It," we have these lines:—

"Sweet are the uses of adversity;  
 Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,  
 Wears yet a precious jewel in his head."—*Act II. Sc. 1.*

And certainly, it is not possible to doubt that this charm was compounded, concocted, and constructed out of this same quarry of materials; nor is it at all probable, if not quite impossible, that William Shakespeare could ever have had access to it.

#### § 6. PARALLELISMS.

These parallelisms in topics and whole passages, in subject, idea, and language, may furnish the most effective and satisfactory kind of proof; for it is evidence that appeals to the most common standard of judgment. Higher and more general grounds of argument may be still more conclusive to minds that are able to appreciate them. To all such any further exhibition of this kind of evidence might seem to be superfluous; but the demonstration must be made as

near, perfect, and complete as possible, that every one may be satisfied. That this argument may have left some possibility of plagiarism, borrowing, or imitation, must be excluded. In the several instances which have already been stated, the fact has been made to appear as it will be in many more, that the works of Bacon, in which the most evident parallels are found, were not printed until after the plays in question had appeared; and this, of course, excludes the possibility that Shakespeare could have drawn from Bacon, in these instances; and this is enough effectually to establish the entire proposition. On the other hand, is it possible that Bacon may have borrowed from William Shakespeare? The very question would seem to be next to absurd. But let us look at the matter. Francis Bacon had been four years at the bar, and was twenty-five years of age, when William Shakespeare is supposed to have come to London, and joined the theatre as an under-actor, in 1586-7, at the age of twenty-two. He was already a finished scholar, well stored in all the learning of the ancients, or of his own time, an accomplished master in English and Latin composition, a skilful observer and interpreter of Nature in all her departments, familiar with the manners of the highest society, and, in a word, well-furnished at all points for a beginning in this kind of writing: and to suppose such a man would have any occasion to borrow resources of thought, art, style, manner, or diction, from an unlearned under-actor of the Globe Theatre, would be to conceive it possible for a rich man to be made richer by plundering a beggar. So, when, as in the story of the soothsayer, the story of Julius Cæsar and the crown, Aristotle's morals, the doctrine of witches, incantations, visions, prophecy, feigned history, and the immateriate virtues and secret sympathies and antipathies of things, in metaphysical and scientific knowledge, in acquaintance with men and manners, with philosophy, history, and poetry, and in manner of every sort, we find more in Bacon than is tr

be found in the plays themselves, and more than William Shakespeare could possibly have possessed, together with genius, art, wit, ability, and leisure enough to make the necessary use of his own in the way that pleased him best, it becomes utterly preposterous to imagine he was a plagiarist or an imitator of Shakespeare.

Again, in several instances, as in the case of the "Macbeth" and the "Antony and Cleopatra" as compared with the Natural History and the Intellectual Globe, the "Romeo and Juliet" compared with the Fables of Cupid and Nemesis, the "Comedy of Errors" and "Midsummer Night's Dream" compared with the Masques, and many others, considering the dates of publication and approximate times of composition, it is plain that the author must have been engaged upon the corresponding works, at about the same times, with scarcely a possibility of plagiarism either way; and as more is found in Bacon's works than in the plays where the resemblances are greatest, it is a necessary conclusion, not only that Bacon did not borrow from Shakespeare, nor Shakespeare from him, otherwise than as Shakespeare was Bacon himself, but also, that he was himself the author of both the poetry and the prose.

These works appeared from time to time, almost yearly, during a period of twenty-five years or more; and it would be idle to imagine a continuous plagiarism of one author upon another, or a reciprocal exchange between them, for such a length of time, in works of the highest order like these. In both writings, the mode of thinking and the style of composition are incorporate with the man, and completely *sui generis*. No writer of the time, neither Ben Jonson, nor Marlow, nor Raleigh, nor Wotton, Donne, or Herbert, whose poetry approaches nearest, perhaps, of any of that age to the Shakespearean vein, can be brought into any doubtful comparison with this author. Nor are these similitudes any merely borrowed gems set in a meaner gold. And what should be finally conclusive of the whole matter



is, the profound reflection, with which the learned writer, who, in fact, first made this discovery, sums up her very luminous and eloquent view of the subject, namely, that in him, we find "one, at least, furnished for that last and ripest proof of learning, which the drama, in the unmiraculous order of human development, must constitute; that proof of it, in which philosophy returns from history, from its noblest fields, and from her last analysis, with the secret and the material of the creative synthesis, with the secret and material of art."<sup>1</sup>

The following instances of striking resemblances, in particular words and phrases, lying beyond the range of accidental coincidence, or common usage, and not elsewhere made the subject of special comment, have been collated, and will be given here in one body, by way of sample of the innumerable similitudes and identities that everywhere pervade these works; for we, too, "will undertake, by collating the styles, to judge whether he were the author or no."

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"God hath framed the mind of man as a mirrour or glass, capable of the image of the universal world." — *Adv.*, II. 9.<sup>2</sup>

"You do carry two glasses or mirrours of State." — *Speech*, VII. 259.

"If there be a mirrour in the world worthy to hold men's eyes, it is that country." — *New Atlantis*, II. 351.

"Give me leave to set before you two glasses, such as certainly the like never met in one age; the glass of France, and the glass of England, . . . And my lords, I cannot let pass, but in these glasses which I speak of, . . . to show you two things." — *Charge*, II. (*Phil.*) 389.

"That which I have propounded to myself is, . . . to show you your true shape in a glass, . . . one made by the reflection of your own words and actions." — *Letter to Coke*, V. 403.

— "whose end, both at the first, and now, was, and is, to hold, as 'twere, the mirrour up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure." — *Ham.*, Act III. Sc. 2.

<sup>1</sup> Delia Bacon; *Putnam's Magazine*, Jan. 1856, p. 19

<sup>2</sup> The references by figures alone are to Montagu's *Works of Bacon*, Lond., 1825.

— "to make true direction of him his semblable is his mirrour." — *Ham.*

"Whose wisdom was a mirrour to the wisest." — *Hen. VIII., Act III. Sc. 3.*

— "two mirrours of his princely semblance." — *Rich. III., Act III. Sc. 1.*

"You go not, till I set you up a glass

Wherein you may see the inmost part of you." — *Ham., Act III. Sc. 4.*

"Nor feels not what he owes but by reflexion." — *Tro. and Cr., Act III. Sc. 3.*

"Good Lord, Madam, how wisely and aptly can you speak and discern of physic ministered to the body, and consider not that there is the like occasion of physic ministered to the mind." — *Apology.*

— "the particular remedies which learning doth minister to all the diseases of the mind." — II. 82.

"Let that be a sleeping honour awhile and cure the Queen's mind in that point." — *Advice to Essex.*

*Macb.*

Cure her of that:

Can'st thou not minister to a mind diseas'd? —

*Doct.* . . . Therein the patient

Must minister to himself.

*Macb.* Throw physic to the dogs, I'll none of it."

*Macb., Act V. Sc. 3.*

"But perhaps you will ask the question whether it be not better, — . . . Yet it is a greater dignity of mind to bear evils by fortitude and judgment, than by a kind of absenting and alienation of the mind from things present to things future, for that it is to hope. . . . For neither is there always matter of hope, and if there be, yet if it fail but in part, it doth wholly overthrow the constancy and resolution of the mind; — . . . that you have out of a watchful and strong discourse of the mind set down the better success, . . . so that this be a work of the understanding and judgment. . . . You have not dwelt upon the very muse and forethought of the good to come." — *Med. Sac., I. 69.*

"He did now more seriously think of the world to come." — *Hen. VII.*

— "Owing to the premature and forward haste of the understanding, and its jumping or flying to generalities." — *Nov. Org., § 64.*

"And first of all it is more than time that there were an end and surcease made of this unmodest and deformed manner of writing, whereby matter of religion is handled in the style of the stage." — *Church Contr., VII. 32.*

"*Ham.* To be, or not to be; that is the question: —

Whether 't is nobler in the mind — . . .

And makes us rather bear the ills we have,

Than fly to others that we know not of ?

Thus conscience doth make cowards of us all;  
And thus the native hue of resolution  
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought."

*Ham., Act III. Sc. 1.*

— "and catch,  
With his surcease, success; but that this blow  
Might be the be-all and the end-all here,  
But here, upon this bank and shoal of time, —  
We 'd jump the life to come. — But, in these cases,  
We still have judgment here." — *Macb., Act I. Sc. 7.*

— "the advancement of unworthy persons." — *Essay, XV.*

— "and the spurns  
That patient merit of the unworthy takes." — *Ham., Act III. Sc. 1.*

"Cardan saith that weeping and sighing are the chief purgers of grief." — *Sp. VII. 306.*

"If I could purge it of two sorts of errors, whereof the one with frivolous disputations, confutations, and verbosities, the other with blind experiments and auricular traditions and impostures, hath committed so many spoils." — *Letter, 1591.*

"When the times themselves are set upon waste and spoil." — *XIII. 269*

— "let 's purge this choler." — *Rich. II., Act I. Sc. 1.*

"The king is not at the palace; he is gone aboard a new ship to purge melancholy, and air himself." — *Win. Tale, Act IV. Sc. 3.*

"To purge him of that humour." — *Win. Tale, Act II. Sc. 3.*

"I can purge myself of many." — *1 Hen. IV., Act III. Sc. 2.*

"We shall be called purgers." — *Jul. Cæs., Act II. Sc. 1.*

"Are burnt and purg'd away." — *Ham., Act I. Sc. 5.*

"And make Time's spoils despised everywhere." — *Sonnet c.*

"Run reeking o'er the lives of men, as if

'T were a perpetual spoil." — *Cor., Act II. Sc. 2.*

"For this giant bestrideth the sea, and I would take and snare him by the foot on this side." — *Duels, VI. 123.*

"Why, man, he doth bstride the narrow world  
Like a Colossus." — *Jul. Cæs., Act I. Sc. 2.*

"His legs bestrid the ocean." — *Ant. and Cleo., Act V. Sc. 2.*

"Nevertheless, since I do perceive that this cloud hangs over the House." — *Speech, VI. 15.*



"And all the clouds that lower'd upon our house." — *Rich. III.*, Act I. Sc. 1.

— "times answerable, like waters after a tempest, full of working and swelling, though without extremity of storm." — II. 110.

— "secret swelling of seas before a tempest." — *Essay*, XV.

— "an unusual swelling in the state." — *Fel. Q. Eliz.*, III. 472.

— "in such a swelling season." — *Hen. VII.*

— "to such a true and swelling greatness." — *Letter*.

— "adorned and swelling." — I. 269.

"And all things answerable to this portion." — *Tam. Shrew*, Act II. Sc. 1.

— "Why now, blow wind; swell, billow; and swim, bark!  
The storm is up, and all is on the hazard." — *Jul. Cæs.*, Act V. Sc. 1.

— "the swelling scene." — *Hen. V.*, Act I. Chor.

— "upon the swelling tide." — *K. John*, Act II. Sc. 1.

"The ocean swells not so as Aaron storms." — *Tit. And.*, Act IV. Sc. 2.

"The venomous malice of my swelling heart." — *Tit. And.*, Act V. Sc. 3.

"Which thou pourest down from these swelling heavens." — I. *Hen. IV.*, Act III. Sc. 1.

— "to the swelling act of the imperial theme." — *Macb.*, Act I. Sc. 3.

[A favorite word in both.]

— "as if one should learn to weigh, or to measure, or to paint the wind." — *Adv.*, II.

"That tears shall drown the wind." — *Macb.*, Act I. Sc. 7.

"To gild refined gold, to paint the lily." — *K. John*, Act IV. Sc. 2.

"I set down reputation, because of the peremptory tides and currents it hath, which if they be not taken in their due time, are seldom recovered." — *Adv.*, II. 287.

"In the third place, I set down character and reputation, the rather because they have certain tides and seasons, which if they be not taken in due time, are difficult to be recovered, it being extremely hard to restore a sinking reputation." — *De Aug.*

"There is a tide in the affairs of men,  
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;  
Omitted, all the voyage of their life  
Is bound in shallows, and in miseries.  
On such a full sea are we now afloat;  
And we must take the current when it serves,  
Or lose our ventures." — *Jul. Cæs.*, Act IV. Sc. 3.

—"in the jaws of death."—*New Atl.*, II. 333.

"Even in the jaws of danger and of death."—*K. John*, Act V. Sc. 2.

"Another cause may be, because all kind of heat dilates and extends the air, . . . . which produces this breeze as the sun goes forward. . . . . Seeing progression is always from some certain place or bound, inquire diligently, or as well as thou cans't, concerning the place of the first beginning, and, as it were, the spring of any wind. . . . . For the wheeling of the air continues also in the night, but the heat of the sun does not, — . . . Surely, such winds are tired, as it were, that can scarcely break through the thickness of the night air; . . . . and thence, thunders and lightnings and storms, with falling of broken clouds."—*Nat. Hist. of Winds*.

"*Sold.* As whence the sun 'gins his reflexion  
Ship-wrecking storms and direful thunders break;  
So from that spring, whence comfort seem'd to come,  
Discomfort swells."—*Macb.*, Act I. Sc. 1.

\* Another precept of this knowledge is, to imitate nature."—*Adv.*, II. 238.

—"and be not carried away with a whirlwind or tempest of ambition."

*Ibid.* 291.

"the giddy agitation and whirlwind of argument."

—"to the use, and, as I may term it, service of my Lord of Essex."

II. 248.

"We have taken the loud and vocal, and, as I may call it, streperous carriage."—VII. 474.

"Hominis non est apes imitari."—*De Ira*, XII. 374.

"*Imitari* is nothing."—*Love's Labor's Lost*, Act IV. Sc. 2.

—"they imitated humanity so abominably, . . . . that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature, . . . . for in the very torrent, tempest, and (as I may say) whirlwind of your passion."—*Ham.*, Act III. Sc. 2.

—"that afterwards kindled such a fire and combustion."

*Henry VII.*, III. 126.

"As dry combustious matter is to fire."—*Ven. and Adon.*

—"for kindling such a combustion in the state."

*Henry VIII.*, Act V. Sc. 2.

—"transported to the mad degree of love."—*Essay of Love*.

"That I essentially am not in madness,  
But mad in craft."—*Ham.*, Act III. Sc. 4.

"You are transported by calamity

Thither, where more attends you."—*Cor.*, Act I. Sc. 1.

"And lastly, to discontinue altogether." — II. 132.

—"and so either break it altogether, or defer any other delay."

*Letter*, XII. 245.

—"let a man either avoid the occasion altogether." — II. 133.

"O, reform it, altogether." — *Ham.*, Act III. Sc. 2.

"Not altogether, sir." — *Lear*, Act II. Sc. 4.

"This is not altogether fool, my lord." — *Lear*, Act I. Sc. 4.

"I perceive it was not altogether your brother's evil disposition."

*Lear*, Act III. Sc. 5.

—"indisposed to actions of great peril and motion." — *Bacon*.

"Enterprises of great pith and moment." — *Ham.*, Act II. Sc. 1.

"But when matter comes to be censured or decreed." — *Wisd. of the Anc.*, III. 94.

—"it was perused, weighed, censured, altered, and made almost a new writing." — *Apol.*, VI. 275.

[A word in the use of the Star-Chamber, meaning to *adjudge*.]

"*Edm.* How, my lord, I may be censured." — *Lear*, Act III. Sc. 5.

"Censure me in your wisdom,

And awake your senses that you may the better judge."

*Jul. Cesar*, Act III. Sc. 2.

—"we will both our judgments join

In censure of his seeming." — *Ham.*, Act III. Sc. 2.

"Hath censur'd him

Already; and, as I hear, the provost hath

A warrant for his execution." — *Meas. for Meas.*, Act I. Sc. 5.

"But enough of these toys." — *Essay*.

"But these things are but toys." — *Letter*, XII. 292.

[A word much used in both.]

"And such like toys as these." — *Richard III.*, Act I. Sc. 1.

—"shall we fall foul for toys." — 2 *Henry IV.*, Act II. Sc. 4.

"These antique fables, nor these fairy toys."

*Mid. Night's Dream*, Act V. Sc. 1.

—"the recreations of my other studies." — *Letter*.

—"some lease of quick revenue." — *Letter to Burgh*.

"But is there no quick recreation granted?" — *Play*.



"There was much ado and a great deal of world; but this matter of pomp, which is heaven to some men, is hell to me, or purgatory, at least." — *Letter to Buck.*, 1617.

—"I am in purgatory." — *Letter*.

—"all the vain pomp and outward shows of honour." — *Char. of Cæs.*

"That I have much ado to know myself." — *Mer. of Ven.*, Act I. Sc. 1.

"What a deal of world

I wander from the jewels that I love." — *Rich. II.*, Act I. Sc. 3.

—"such a deal of wonder is broken out." — *Win. Tale*, Act V. Sc. 2.

"For there will be a world of water shed." — *1 Hen. IV.*, Act III. Sc. 1.

"I should venture purgatory for 't." — *Oth.*, Act IV. Sc. 3.

—"purgatory, torture, hell itself." — *Rom. and Juliet*, Act III. Sc. 3.

"Vain pomp and glory of this world, I hate thee."

*Henry VIII.*, Act III. Sc. 2.

"Illuminate the eyes of our mind." — *Prayer*, VII. 6.

"The sun, the eye of the world." — *Ibid.* 107.

—"the eye of this kingdom." — *New Atl.*

"For everything depends upon fixing the mind's eye steadily."

*Intr. to Nov. Org.*

—"mine eye is my mind." — *Sonnet*.

"In my mind's eye, Horatio." — *Hamlet*, Act I. Sc. 2.

"This is the only justification which I will use." — *Subm.* XVI. 352.

"I will a round unvarnish'd tale deliver, . . . .

This only is the witchcraft I have used." — *Othello*, Act I. Sc. 3.

"The states of Italy, they be like little quilllets of freehold."

*Dis. of Eliz.*, VII. 163.

"That it was no mystery or quiddity of the common law."

*Arraign.*, VI. 359.

"This construction is no mystery or quiddity of law." — *Speech*.

"That hath been the sconce and fort of all Europe." — *Dis.*, VII. 164.

"Why may not that be the skull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddits, now, his quilllets, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks? why does he suffer this rude knave to knock him about the sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery?" — *Hamlet*, Act V. Sc. 1.

or opening I commend beads or pieces of the roots of *Carduus* bene-also" — *Nat. Hist.*, § 963.

use ale with a little *enula campane*, germander, *Carduus*, sage, &c. at a robust health." — *Med. Rem.*

—“*spodium*, hartshorn, frankincense, dried bull's pistle, gum tragacanth.”  
*Phys. Rem.*

—“succory, liverwort, wormwood, fennel-root, hart's tongue, daffodilly, Indian nard, holy thistle, camomile, rue,— . . . cordials, rosemary, rind of citron, amber, balm, pimpernel, cardamon, . . . flowers of heliotrope, penny-royal, seed of nettle, sesamum, . . . olibanum, civet, juniper, fat of deer, thyme, marigold, . . . sweet marjoram, violets, mallows, fennel-seeds, &c.” — *Med. Rem.*

[The chapters of the Nat. Hist. are called “centuries.”]

“Get you some of this distill'd Carduus  
Benedictus, . . . it is the only thing for a qualm.”  
*Much Ado., Act III. Sc. 4.*

“*Fal.* You dried neat's tongue, bull's pizzle, you stockfish.”  
*1 Henry, Act IV. Sc. 4.*

—“purge thick amber and plumb-tree gum.” — *Ham., Act II. Sc. 2.*

—“eats conger and fennel.” — *2 Henry IV.*

“When daffodils begin to peer.” — *Winter's Tale, Act IV. Sc. 2.*

—“nettles of India.” — *Twelfth Night, Act II. Sc. 5.*

—“sow it with nettle-seed.” — *Tempest, Act I. Sc. 2.*

—“instead of oil and balm.” — *Troil. and Cres., Act I.*

“For you there 's rosemary and rue.” — *Winter's Tale, Act IV. Sc. 3.*

“There 's fennel for you, . . . there 's rue, . . . there 's rosemary.” — *Hamlet, Act IV. Sc. 5.*

“And Peter Turf and Henry Pimpernel,  
And twenty more such names as these,  
Which never were, nor no man ever saw.”  
*Tam. Sh. Intr. II.*

“With hardocks, hemlock, nettles, cuckoo-flowers,  
Darnel, and all the idle weeds that grow  
In our sustaining corn — a century send forth.”  
*Lear, Act IV. Sc. 4.*

—“crow-flowers, nettles, daisies.” — *Henry IV., Sc. 7.*

—“sesa!” — *Lear, Act III. Sc. 4, 6.*

—“lavender, mints, savory, marjoram;  
The marigold that goes to bed” —  
*Winter's Tale, Act IV. Sc. 3.*

“Give the word. Sweet marjoram.” — *Lear, Act IV. Sc. 6.*

“Whereby concealed treasures shall be brought into use by the industry of converted penitents, whose wretched carcases the impartial laws have, or shall, dedicate, as untimely feasts, to the worms of the earth, in whose

womb these mineral riches must ever be buried, as lost abortions, unless he made the active medicines to deliver them." — *Phys. Rem.*, VII. 215.

"Cor. — Whose bones I prize

As the dead carcases of unburied men." — *Cor.*, Act III. Sc. 2.

— "Macduff was from his mother's womb  
Untimely ripp'd." — *Macb.*, Act V. Sc. 7.

"Abortive be it, prodigious, and untimely."

*Rich. III.*, Act I. Sc. 2.

— "food for worms." — 1 *Hen. IV.*, Act V. Sc. 4.

"a certain convocation of politic worms are e'en at him."

*Ham.*, Act IV. Sc. 2.

"Thou elvish-marked, abortive, rioting hag."

*Rich. III.*, Act I. Sc. 2.

"In the deep bosom of the ocean buried."

*Rich. III.*, Act I. Sc. 1.

"If we simply looked to the fabric of the world." — XII. 73.

"For by this unchangeable way, my lords, have I prepared to erect the academical fabric of this island's Solomon's House, modelled in my New Atlantis." — *Phys. Rems.*, VII.

— "relations of harmony to the fabric and system of the universe." — XV. 200.

— "the conformation and fabric of the universe." — *Nov. Org.*, II. 47.

— "seeing that both the matter and fabric of the world are most truly referred to a Creator." — *Wis. of the Anc.*

— "so to mingle the elements as may conserve the fabric." — *Sp.*, VII 429.

"You may as well

Forbid the sea for to obey the moon,

As, or by oath remove, or counsel, shake

The fabric of his folly." — *Winter's Tale*, Act I. Sc. 2.

"When it stands against a falling fabric." — *Cor.*, Act III. Sc. 1.

"And like the baseless fabric of this vision,

The cloud-cap'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,

The solemn temples, the great globe itself,

Yea, all that it inherit, shall dissolve." — *Temp.*, Act III. Sc. 1.

— "to the king's infinite honour." — VII. 341.

— "and a finite creature shall possess an infinite happiness." — *Paradises*, VII. 27.

— "the infinite flight of birds." — *New Atl.*, II. 345.



— "hath cost such an infinite deal of blood and treasure of our realm of England." — VII. 195.

— "sweet travelling through the universal variety."

*Masque*, XIII. 16.

— "but her favour infinite." — *Gent. of Ver.*, Act II. Sc. 1.

— "purchased at an infinite rate." — *Mer. Wives*, Act II. Sc. 2.

— "these fellows of infinite tongue." — *Hen. V.*, Act V. Sc. 2.

— "nor custom stale her infinite variety."

*Ant. and Cleo.* Act II. Sc. 2.

— "how infinite in faculties." — *Ham.*, Act II. Sc. 2.

— "a fellow of infinite jest." — *Ham.*, Act V. Sc. 1.

— "discovery of the infinite flatteries." — *Tim.*, Act V. Sc. 1.

"She hath pursued conclusions infinite

Of easy ways to die." — *Ant. and Cleo.*, Act V. Sc. 2.

"In Nature's infinite book of secrecy,

A little I can read." — *Ant. and Cleo.*, Act I. Sc. 2.

"Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of nothing, more than any man in all Venice." — *Mer. of Ven.*, Act I. Sc. 1.

"But to our children raise it many a stage,  
That all the world to thee may glory give." — *Psalm*, VII. 103.

"Or that the frame was up of earthly stage." — *Ib.* 101.

"While your life is nothing but a continued acting upon a stage."

*Masque*, XIII. 121.

— "While states and empires pass many periods." — *Ib.* 116.

"All the world's a stage,

And all the men and women merely players: . . . .

And one man in his time plays many parts."

*As You Like It*, Act II. Sc. 7.

"Howsoever I be frail and partake of the abuses of the times." — *Letter to the King*.

— "for the poor abuses of the times want countenance." — 1 *Hen. IV.*, Act I. Sc. 2.

"All as the chaff, which to and fro  
Is toss'd at mercy of the wind." — *Psalm*, VII. 98.

"He is often toss'd and shaken." — *Psalm*.

"The word, the bread of life, they toss up and down."

*Ch. Con.* VII. 56.

"He tosseth his thoughts more easily." — *Essay*.

— "to command down the winds of malicious and seditious rumours  
wherewith men's counsels may have been tossed to and fro." — *Jud. Proc.*

"Strives in his little world of man to outscorn  
The to-and-fro conflicting wind and rain." — *Lear, Act III. Sc. 1.*

"After late tossing on the breaking seas." — *Rich. II., Act III. Sc. 2.*

— "back do I see their treasures." — *Lear, Act V. Sc. 2.*

— "these haunts been used from wrong." — *Per., Act V. Sc. 1.*

[A word much used by both.]

— "the great storm of mighty invasion, not of preparation." — *Dis.  
Elin., VII. 101.*

— "never stained with the least note of ambition or malice." — *Id.* 167.

— "with strong and mighty preparation." — *1 Hen. IV., Act IV. Sc. 1.*

— "this most dreadful preparation." — *Hen. V., Act V. Sc. 2.*

— "give dreadful note of preparation." — *Hen. V., Act IV. Chor.*

— "but steyd up in the schools and scholastic cells." — *Nat. H., IV. 122.*

— "and here you sty me  
On this hard rock; while you do keep from me  
The rest of the island." — *Temp., Act I. Sc. 2.*

— "and did pour into man the intellectual light as the top and consum-  
mation of thy workmanship." — *Proser., VII. 9.*

— "for princes being at the top of human desires." — *Ad.*

— "being at the top of all worldly bliss." — *Hist. Hen. VII.*

"And wears upon his holy brow the round  
And top of sovereignty." — *Macb., Act IV. Sc. 1.*

— "the top of admiration." — *Temp., Act III. Sc. 1.*

— "like eyes that cry out on the top of question."  
*Ham., Act II. Sc. 2.*

— "competitor in top of all design." — *Ant. and Cleo., Act V. Sc. 1.*

"If He, which is the top of judgment."  
*Mens. for Mens., Act II. Sc. 2.*

— "superstitions and fantastical arts." — *Ad., II.*

— "fantastical estates." — *Sp., XIII. 268.*

— "but a certain fantastical and notional fire."  
*Fab. of Cup., XV. 56.*

— "according to the fantastic notions of Apollonius." — *XV.* 195.

— "a kind of fantastic matter." — *XV.* 49.

— "and telling her fantastical lies." — *Oth.*, *Act II. Sc. 1.*

— "that it alone is high fantastical." — *Tw. Night*, *Act I. Sc. 1.*

"It was a mad fantastical trick." — *Meas. for Meas.*, *Act III. Sc. 2*

"Are ye fantastical?" — *Macb.*, *Act I. Sc. 3.*

"Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven."

*Meas. for Meas.*, *Act II. Sc. 2.*

— "fantastic garlands did she make." — *Ham.*, *Act IV. Sc. 7.*

— "and that was by that battle quenched and ended." — *Sp.*, *VI.* 232.

"This is the cause to quench all good spirits." — *Letter.*

— "and these vapours quench the spirits by degrees." — *Nat. Hist.*

"What hath quenched them." — *Macb.*, *Act II. Sc. 2.*

"And quench'd the stellar fires." — *Lear*, *III. Sc. 7.*

— "to quench mine honour." — *Hen. VIII.*, *Act V. Sc. 2.*

"The clouds as chariots swift do scour the sky." — *Psalms*, *VII.* 105.

— "and so this traitor Essex made his colour the scouring of some noble-men and counsellors from her Majesty's favour." — *XVI.* n. 4 F.

"What rhubarb, senna, or what purgative drug  
Would scour these English hence?" — *Macb.*, *Act V. Sc. 3.*

"The enemies' drum is heard, and fearful scouring  
Doth choke the air with dust." — *Tim.*, *Act V. Sc. 3.*

— "that neither beareth the greatness of alteration."

*Dis.*, *VII.* 150.

— "but that is an altering of government." — *Speech.*

— "in removing or alteration of servants." — *VII.* 65.

— "the alteration of religion." — *VII.* 149.

— "to make so main an alteration in the Church." — *VII.* 70.

— "and that the affrighted globe  
Should yawn at alteration." — *Oth.*, *Act V. Sc. 2.*

"He's full of alteration." — *Lear*, *Act V. Sc. 1.*

"And changes fill the cup of alteration."

*2 Hen. IV.*, *Act III. Sc. 1.*

"What an alteration of honour has  
Desperate want made." — *Tim.*, *Act IV. Sc. 3.*



"The Church of Rome, . . . . a donative cell of the King of Spain." - VII. 162.

— "the obscure cells of solitary monks." — *Int. of Nat.*

— "that part of learning which answereth to one of the cells, domicile, or offices, of the mind of man; which is that of Memory." — *Adv. II.*

— "bred in the cells of gross and solitary monks." — *Adv., II.*

"Your beadman, therefore, addresseth himself to your Majesty for a cell to retire to." — *Letter to the King.*

— "for it was time for me to go to a cell." — *Letter.*

"It were a pretty cell for my fortune." — *Letter.*

— "not that I am more better  
Than Prospero, master of a full poor cell." — *Temp., Act I. Sc. 2.*

— "it is a cell of ignorance." — *Cym., Act IV. Sc. 2.*

— "sweet cell of virtue and nobility." — *Tit. And., Act I. Sc. 2.*

"O, proud death!  
What feast is toward in thine eternal cell?" — *Ham., Act V. Sc. 2.*

— "the vapours and fumes of law." — *Sp., VII. 268.*

— "and these vapours quench the spirits by degrees." — *Nat. His*

"By breaking through the foul and ugly mists  
Of vapours, that did seem to strangle him."

*1 Hen. IV., Act I. Sc. 2.*

— "the local centre and heart of the laws of this realm." — *Sp., VII. 268.*

— "this foul swine  
Lies now even in the centre of this isle."

*Rich. III., Act V. Sc. 2.*

— "whereof he doubteth not they have heard by glimpses." — *Sp., VII. 210.*

— "the fault and glimpse of newness."

*Measure for Measure, Act I. Sc. 3.*

"That thou, dead corse, in complete steel

Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon." — *Ham., Act I. Sc. 4.*

"I hope I shall not be found to have the troubled fountain of a corrupt heart." — *Letter, 1620.*

"Our pleasure therefore is, who are the head and fountain of justice in our dominions." — VII. 327.

"For there are certain fountains of justice, whence all civil laws are derived but as streams." — *Adv., II. 295.*

-- "his majesty who is the fountain of grace." — *Sp.*, VII. 252.

-- "the ready fountain of her continual benignity."

*Dis. of Eliz.* VII. 156.

-- "the most sacred fountain of all grace and goodness." — VII. 6.

-- "the spring-head thereof seemeth to me not to have been visited."

*Adv.*

"The spring, the head, the fountain of your blood  
Is stopp'd. — . . . .

*Macd.* Your royal father's murder'd." — *Macb.*, Act II. Sc. 3.

"The fountain from which my current runs." — *Oth.*, Act IV. Sc. 2.

-- "the fountain of our love." — *Tro. and Cress.*, Act III. Sc. 2.

-- "those legions of spectres and worlds of shadows, which we see hovering over all the expanse of the philosophies." — *Int. Globe*, XII. 155.

"With many legions of strange fantasies." — *K. John*, Act V. Sc. 7.

-- "she hath legions of angels." — *Mer. Wives*, Act I. Sc. 3.

"Methought a legion of foul fiends." — *Richard III.*, Act I. Sc. 4.

-- "move always and be carried with the motion of your first mover which is your sovereign." — *Sp.*, VII. 259.

[This "first mover" comes from Aristotle, who treats of the Divine Spirit, or absolute cause of all movement, as the "First Mover" (*πρωτον κινουν*).]

"O, thou eternal Mover of the heavens,  
Look with a gentle eye upon this wretch!"

*2 Hen. VI.*, Act III. Sc. 3.

"I think that all this dust is raised by light rumours and buzzes." — *Speech*

"Suspensions that the mind of itself gathers are but buzzes; but suspicions that are artificially nourished and put into men's heads by the tales and whisperings of others, have stings." — *Essay*, XXXI.

"For I will buzz abroad such prophecies."

*3 Henry VI.*, Act V. Sc. 6.

"*Glos.* Plots have I laid, inductions dangerous,  
By drunken prophecies, libels, and dreams,  
To set my brother Clarence, and the king,  
In deadly hate the one against the other."

*Richard III.*, Act I. Sc. 1.

-- "well studied in the book of God's word, or in the book of God's works: divinity or philosophy." — *Adv.*, *Spedd.*, VI. 97.

— "and so by degrees to read in the volumes of his creatures."

*Int. Nat., Ibid. 36*

— "when the book of hearts shall be opened." — *Letter*, 1620.

— "laying before us two books or volumes to study, if we will be secured from error; first the Scriptures revealing the will of God, and then the creatures expressing his power." — *Int. Nat., Ibid. 33.*

"I' the world's volume

Our Britain seems as of it, but not in it;

In a great pool, a swan's nest." — *Cymb., Act III. Sc. 4.*

"*Jul.* O, Nature, — . . . .

Was ever book containing such vile matter

So fairly bound?" — *Rom. and Juliet, Act III. Sc. 2.*

"In Nature's infinite book of secrecy,

A little I can read." — *Ant. and Cleo., Act I. Sc. 2.*

"Within the book and volume of my brain."

*Hamlet, Act I. Sc. 5.*

"The leaf of barrage hath an excellent spirit to repress the fuliginous vapour of dusky melancholy, and so to cure madness; — . . . . it will make a sovereign drink for melancholy passions." — *Nat. Hist., § 18.*

— "sable colored melancholy." — *Love's Labor's Lost, Act I. Sc. 1.*

— "and dusky vapours of night." — *1 Henry VI., Act II. Sc. 2.*

— "borne with black vapours." — *2 Henry VI., Act II. Sc. 4.*

— "the sovereign'st thing on earth

Was parmaceti, for an inward bruise." — *1 Henry IV., Act I. Sc. 3.*

"Because the partition of sciences are not like several lines that meet in one angle, but rather like branches of trees that meet in one stem."

*XVI. n. 4, App.*

"As many arrows loos'd several ways

Fly to one mark; . . . .

As many several ways meet in one town;

As many fresh streams run in one self-sea;

As many lines close in the dial's centre." — *Henry V., Act I. Sc. 2.*

"Caius Marius was general of the Romans against the Cimbers, who cam with such a sea of multitude upon Italy." — *Apoth. 242.*

"Who taught the bee to sail through such a vast sea of air?" — *Adv.*

"Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood

Clean from my hand? No; this my hand will rather

The multitudinous seas incarnardine,

Making the green one red." — *Macb., Act II. Sc. 1 (2).*



\* But my level is no farther but to do the part of a true friend."

*Letter*, 1623.

"As for all direct or indirect glances or levels at men's persons." — VII. 59.

—"for the other do level point blank at the inventory of causes and axioms." — *Nat. Hist.*

[A favorite expression.]

"Everything lies level to our wish." — *Henry IV.*

"We steal by line and level." — *Tempest.*

"And hold their level with thy princely heart." — *Henry IV.*

"Can thrust me from a level consideration." — 2 *Henry IV.*

"And therefore level not to hit their lives." — *Richard III.*

"For that 's the mark I know you level at." — *Pericles.*

— "no levell'd malice

Infests one comma in the course I hold." — *Timon.*

— "and be so true to thyself as thou be not false to others." — *Ess.*, XXIII.

"*Pol.* . . . . To thine own self be true;

And it must follow, as the night the day,

Thou canst not then be false to any man." — *Hamlet*, Act I. Sc. 3

"The poets make fame a *monster*. They describe her in part elegantly; and in part gravely and sententiously. They say look how many feathers she hath; so many eyes she hath underneath; so many tongues; so many voices; she pricks up so many ears. This is a flourish. There follow excellent parables; as that she gathereth strength in going; that she goeth upon the ground, and yet hideth her head in the clouds: that in the day time she sitteth in a watchtower, and flieth most by night: that she mingleth things done with things not done and that she is a terror to great cities. . . .

"But now, if a man can tame this *monster*, — . . . . But we are infected with the style of the poets." — *Essay of Fame.*

"Enter Rumour, painted full of tongues.

*Rum.* Open your ears; for which of you will stop

The vent of hearing when loud Rumour speaks?

I from the Orient to the drooping West,

Making the wind my post-horse, still unfold

The acts commenced on this ball of Earth:

Upon my tongues continual slanders ride,

The which in every language I pronounce,

Stuffing the ears of men with false reports.

. . . . Rumour is a pipe

Blown by surmises, jealousies, conjectures;

And of so easy and so plain a stop,

That the blunt wonder with uncounted heads,  
The still-dissordant wavering multitude,  
Can play upon it."—2 *Henry IV., Ind.*

"And as for Maximilian, upon twenty respects, he could not have been  
he man."—*Hist. Henry VII.*

—"so that acts of this nature (if this were one) do more good than  
twenty bills of grace."—*Letter, 1617.*

[*"Twenty"* is an habitual expletive of this author.]

"Each substance of a grief hath twenty shadows."

*Richard II., Act II. Sc. 2.*

"And I as rich in having such a jewel

As twenty seas, if all their sand were pearl."—*Gent. of Ver.*

"Than to accomplish twenty golden crowns."

*3 Henry VI., Act III. Sc. 2.*

—"twenty times his worth."—2 *Henry VI., Act III. Sc. 2.*

—"twenty thousand times."—*Ibid., Act III. Sc. 2.*

—"twenty times so many faces."—*Ibid., Act II. Sc. 4.*

—"twenty times their power."—*Ibid., Act II. Sc. 4.*

"With twenty thousand soul confirming oaths."

*Gent. of Ver., Act II. Sc. 6.*

"I am yours surer to you than your own life; for as they speak of the  
turquoise stone in a ring, I will break into twenty pieces before you have the  
least fall."—*Letter to Essex, XII. 292.*

"Tub. One of them shewed me a ring, that he had of your daughter for  
a monkey.

Sly. Out upon her! Thou torturest me, Tubal; it was my turquoise: I  
had it of Leah when I was a bachelor."—*Mer. of Ven., Act II. Sc. 1.*

"Yet evermore it must be remembered that the least part of knowledge,  
passed to man by this so large charter from God, must be subject to that  
use, for which God hath granted it, which is the benefit and relief of the  
state and society of man."—*Int. of Nat.*

"Nature never lends

The smallest scruple of her excellence;

But, like a thrifty goddess, she determines

Herself the glory of a creditor—

Both thanks and use."—*Measure for Measure, Act I. Sc. 2.*

"With regard to the countenance, be not influenced by the old adage  
*Trust not to a man's face.*"—*De Aug., (Boston), IX. 272.*

"There's no art  
To find the mind's construction in the face." — *Macbeth*, Act I. Sc. 4.

"Deformed persons are commonly even with nature;—for as nature has done ill by them, so do they by nature, being for the most part (as the Scripture saith) void of natural affection: and so they have their revenge of natures. Certainly there is a consent between the body and the mind, and where nature erreth in the one, she ventureth in the other: . . . the curse that the Psalm speaketh of, *That it shall be like the untimely fruit of a woman, brought forth before it came to perfection.* . . . Whosoever hath anything fixed in his person, that doth induce contempt, hath also a perpetual spur in himself to rescue and deliver himself from scorn; therefore all deformed persons are extreme bold. . . . But because there is in man an election, touching the frame of his mind, and a necessity in the frame of his body, the stars of natural inclination are sometimes obscured by the sun of discipline and virtue." — *Ess.*, I. 46.

—"which had been the spur of this region." — *Fel. Q. Eliz.*, I. 400.

"*Glos.* For I have often heard my mother say,  
I came into the world with my legs forward. . . .  
The midwife wondered; and the women cried,  
'O, Jesus bless us, he is born with teeth!'  
And so I was; which plainly signified  
That I should snarl, and bite, and play the dog.  
Then, since the Heavens have shap'd my body so,  
Let Hell make crook'd my mind to answer it."

3 *Henry VI.*, Act V. Sc. 6

"*Glos.* I, that am curtail'd of this fair proportion,  
Cheated of feature by dissembling nature,  
Deform'd, unfinish'd, sent before my time  
Into this breathing world, scarce half made up,  
And that so lamely and unfashionable,  
That dogs bark at me as I halt by them;—  
Why, I, in this weak piping time of peace,  
Have no delight to pass away the time,  
Unless to spy my shadow in the sun,  
And descant on mine own deformity:  
And therefore, since I cannot prove a lover,  
To entertain these fair well-spoken days,  
I am determined to prove a villain,  
And hate the idle pleasures of these days."

*Richard III.*, Act I. Sc. 1

"*Glos.* Now is the winter of our discontent  
Made glorious summer by this sun of York." — *Ibid.*, Act I. Sc. 1

"I have no spur  
To prick the sides of my intent." — *Macbeth*, Act I. Sc. 7.



As this list must have an end, let it be closed with a comparison of Bacon's "Office of Constables" (published in 1608) with the scenes of the Watch in the "Much Ado About Nothing", (written in 1599,) thus:—

"4 *Ques.* Of what rank or order of men are they? *Ans.* They be men as is now used, of inferior, yea, of base condition; . . . . and that they be not aged or sickly, in respect of keeping watch and toll of their place: nor that they be in any man's livery. . . . . intended and executed for conservation of peace, and repression of all manner of disturbance and hurt of the people, and that as well by way of prevention as punishment. To take the ancient oath of allegiance of all males above twelve years. . . . . The election of the petty constable is by the people."

"*Dogberry.* Are you good men and true?

*Verges.* Yea, or else it were pity but they should suffer salvation, body and soul.

*Dogb.* Nay, that were a punishment too good for them; if they should have any allegiance in them, being chosen for the Prince's Watch. . . . . First, who think you is the most desertless man to be Constable?

1 *Watch.* Hugh Outcake, sir, or George Seacoal, for they can read and write.

*Dogb.* Why you speak like an ancient and most quiet watchman."

—"and that the statutes made for the punishment of sturdy beggars, vagabonds, rogues, and other idle persons coming within your office be truly executed and the offenders punished. . . . . Likewise the additional power which is given by divers statutes, it is hard to comprehend in any brevity."

"*Dogb.* . . . . You are thought here to be the most senseless and fit man for the Constable of the Watch; therefore, bear you the lantern. This is your charge. You shall comprehend all vagrom men; and you are to bid any man stand in the Prince's name."

"6 *Ques.* What if they refuse to do their office? . . . . Command them in the king's name to keep peace, and depart, and forbear."

"2 *Watch.* How if he will not stand? . . . . How if the nurse be asleep and will not hear us?

*Dogb.* Why then, depart in peace, and let the child awake her with crying. . . . .

1 *Watch.* We charge you in the Prince's name, stand."

"5 *Ques.* What allowance have the constables? *Ans.* They have no allowance, but are bound by duty to perform their office gratis; which may be endured, because it is but annual."

"*Dogb.* . . . . for, for the watch to babble and talk is most tolerable and not to be endured."

—"and to inquire of all default of officers, as constables, ale-tasters, and the like. . . . . And so much for the peace."

"Dogb. . . . . Well, you are to call at all the alehouses, and bid those that are drunk get them to bed. . . . . This is the end of the charge."

"The use of his office is rather for preventing or staying of mischief than for punishment of offences. . . . . Likewise the power which is given by divers statutes — . . . . . or when sudden matter ariseth upon his view, or notorious circumstances, to apprehend offenders, and to carry them before the justices of peace, and generally to imprison in like cases of necessity, when the case will not endure the present carrying of the party before the justices. . . . . the jury being to present offenders, and offences are chiefly to take light from the constable . . . . . and to resist and punish all turbulent persons, whose misdemeanors may tend to the disquiet of the people. . . . . That two sufficient gentlemen or yeomen shall be appointed constables of every hundred; — the sheriff thereof shall nominate sufficient persons to be bailiffs."

"Dogb. You, Constable, are to present the Prince's own person: if you meet the Prince in the night, you may stay him. . . . . Five shillings to one on 't, with any man that knows the statutes, he may stay him: marry, not without the Prince be willing; for, indeed, the watch ought to offend no man, and it is an offence to stay a man against his will." — Act III. Sc. 3.

"Siz. But which are the offenders, that are to be examined? let them come before Master Constable." — Act IV. Sc. 2.

"Dogb. If there be any matter of weight chances, call up me: keep your fellows' counsels and your own and good night." — Act III. Sc. 3.

"Dogb. One word, sir, our watch, sir, have, indeed, comprehended two suspicious persons, and we would have them this morning examined before your worship.

Leon. Take their examination yourself, and bring it me.

Dogb. It shall be suffigance." — Act III. Sc. 5.

"And the constable ought to seize his goods, and inventory them in presence of honest neighbours."

"Dogb. Goodman Verges, sir, speaks a little off the matter: an old man, sir, . . . . . but in faith, honest as the skin between his brows.

Verg. Yes, I thank God, I am as honest as any man living, that is an old man, and no honester than I. . . . .

Leon. Neighbours, you are tedious. . . . .

Dogb. Well, one word more, honest neighbours." — Act III. Sc. 5.

— 'et do suspect him of murder or felony, he may declare it to the constable, and the constable ought, upon such declaration or complaint, to carry him before a justice of peace: and if by common voice or fame any man be suspected — . . . . . If any house be suspected — " . . . . .

"Dogb. If you meet a thief, you may suspect him, by virtue of your office to be no true man. . . . .

2 Watch. If we know him to be a thief, shall we not lay hands on him?

*Dogb.* Truly, by your office you may; but, I think, they that touch pitch will be defiled." — *Act III. Sc. 3.*

"*Dogb.* Dost thou not suspect my place? Dost thou not suspect my years?" — *Act IV. Sc. 2.*

"You shall swear that you shall well and truly serve the king."

"*Dogb.* Masters, do you serve God?"

*Bor.* Yes, sir, we hope —

*Dogb.* Write down — that they hope they serve God." — *Act IV. Sc. 2.*

"There is a clerk of the peace for the entering and engrossing all proceedings before the said justices. . . . Others there are of that number called justices of peace and *quorum*. . . . The chief of them is called *custos rotulorum*."

"*Dogb.* We will spare for no wit I warrant you; here 's that [*touching his forehead*] shall drive some of them to a *non. com.*: only get the learned writer to set down our excommunication, and meet me at the goal."

*Act III. Sc. 5.*

"*Slen.* In the County of Gloster, justice of peace and *coram*."

*Shal.* Ay, cousin Slender, and *cust-a-lorum*."

*Slen.* Ay, and *rotulorum* too." — *Merry Wives of Windsor, Act I. Sc. 1.*

The list of these similitudes might be greatly extended, without loss to the force of evidence which they exhibit. indeed, the comparison would be almost without limit, if it could be carried, in this form, to all those individual peculiarities, minute resemblances, more delicate touches, and finer shades of meaning, which impress the mind of the critical reader no less palpably, but which must lose their force when wrenched from the context in this manner. Like the character of a handwriting, the identity can be distinctly seen and felt, while the particulars wherein it consists can scarcely be pointed out, or described. But surely, here is enough to establish such a correspondence, nay, absolute identity, in the thought, style, manner, and diction, and in the distinguishing peculiarities of these writings, as was never known to exist in the compositions of any two different authors that ever lived. It is safe to say no such list can be produced from the writings of any two authors of that or any other age: no similarity of life, genius, or studies ever produced an identity like this. And



here, the vast difference which is known to have existed between these men, in respect of their education, studies, and whole personal history, would seem to preclude all possibility of mistake. The coincidences are not merely such as might be attributed to the style and usage of that age: they extend to the scope of thought, the particular ideas, the modes of thinking and feeling, the choice of metaphor, the illustrative imagery, and those singular peculiarities, oddities, and quaintnesses of expression and use of words, which everywhere and in all times mark and distinguish the individual writer.

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## CHAPTER V.

### MODELS.

"For true art is always capable of advancing."<sup>1</sup> — BACON.

#### § 1. "ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES."

It has already been observed, that Bacon had a purpose, though he broke the order of time, to attempt to draw down to the senses things which flew too high over men's heads in general, in other forms of delivery, by means of patterns of natural stories, and feigned histories or speaking pictures; and it would seem to be very clear, that he had a similar object in view in those "illustrative examples," which were to constitute the Fourth Part of the Great Instauration, which was never published, nor indeed written, otherwise than as we may have some part of it, or at least some exemplification of what it was in part to be, in these very plays. First, premising that after the Second Philosophy, in the previous parts, had succeeded in furnishing the understanding with "the most surest helps and precautions," and had "completed, by a rigorous levy, a host of divine works," nothing would remain to be done but "to attack Philosophy herself," and that, in a matter "so arduous and doubtful," a few reflections must necessarily be inserted, "partly for instruction and partly for present use," he proceeds: —

"The first of these is, that we should offer some ex

<sup>1</sup> "Quin contra, artem veram adollescere statuimus." — *Scola Intellectus Works* (Boston), V. 181; *Trans. of Bacon*, (Mont.), XIV. 426-7; (*Phil.*: III. 519.

amples of our method and course of investigation and discovery, as exhibited in particular subjects; preferring the most dignified subjects of our inquiry, and such as differ most from each other, so that in every branch we may have an example. Nor do we speak of those examples, which are added to particular precepts and rules by way of illustration (for we have furnished them abundantly in the Second Part of our work), but we mean actual types and models, calculated to place, as it were, before our eyes ["*sub oculos*"] the whole process of the mind, and the continuous frame ["*fabricam*"] and order of discovery in particular subjects selected for their variety and importance. For we recollect that in mathematics, with the diagram before our eyes, the demonstration easily and clearly followed, but without this advantage, everything appeared more intricate and more subtle than was really the case. We devote, therefore, the Fourth Part of our work to such examples, which is in fact nothing more than a particular and fully developed application of the Second Part."<sup>1</sup>

As it is said in his letter to Fulgentius, the great Instauration began with the *De Augmentis Scientiarum* as the first part; the *Novum Organum* was the second part; the Natural History was the third part; these Examples were to be the fourth part; the Prodrumus (or forerunner of the Second Philosophy) was to be the fifth part; and the sixth part would complete philosophy itself, and "touch almost the universals of nature." In this consummation of the Second Philosophy, he would, of course, arrive again at the *Philosophia Prima*, by that road, and in that way; and so, philosophy itself would necessarily include both the First and the Second Philosophy in one Universal Science, which would amount to "Sapience," or "the knowledge of all things divine and human."<sup>2</sup> In this letter, the subject of the Fourth Part is introduced in connection with certain

<sup>1</sup> *Distribution of the Work; Works* (Mont.), XIV. 22; (Spedd., I.)

<sup>2</sup> *De Aug. Scient.*



portions of the Natural History, concerning winds, and touching life and death, which he mentions as "mixed writings composed of natural history, and a rude and imperfect instrument, or help of the understanding." He then proceeds to say, that this Fourth Part should contain many examples of that instrument, more exact and much more fitted to rules of induction." From these expressions alone it might be inferred that these examples were to be confined strictly to matters of physical inquiry; but when it is considered, that the scope of his system always embraced the whole field of knowledge (however divided into parts), of which his principal divisions were God, Nature, and Man, it may not appear incredible that this instrument or help of the understanding, and these examples, were to find an application to man and human affairs as well as to mere physical nature.

Indeed, all question of this would seem to be set at rest by his Thirteen Tables of the Thread of the Labyrinth; for, in the paper entitled "*Filum Labyrinthi sive Inquisitio Legitima de Motu*," these tables are enumerated in like manner as a part of Natural Philosophy, and in the *Novum Organum*, they are spoken of as included in the Fourth Part. The only specimens of them actually found attempted in his works are certain fragments, under such titles as Heat and Cold, Sound and Hearing, Dense and Rare, the History of Winds, and the like; but that the entire series was to have a much wider range, is evident from his own "Digest of the Tables," which is as follows:—

"The first are tables of motion; the second, of heat and cold; the third, of the rays of things and impressions at a distance; the fourth, of vegetation and life; the fifth, of the passions of the animal body; the sixth, of sense and objects; the seventh, of the affections of the mind; the eighth, of the mind and its faculties. These pertain to the separation of nature, and concern Form; but these which follow pertain to the construction of nature, and con-

cern Matter. Ninth, of the architecture of the world; tenth, of great relations, or the accidents of essence; eleventh, of the composition of bodies or inequality of parts; twelfth, of species or the ordinary fabric and combinations of things; and thirteenth, of small relations or properties. And so a universal inquisition may be completed in thirteen tables."<sup>1</sup>

It is not easy to understand exactly what his meaning was; but he probably considered motion as a phenomenal effect of force; and there is no motion without moving power. Addressing himself to an inquiry into the nature, laws, limitations, and modes of power, or forces, by experimental methods, and finding the subject presented in nature in the shape of phenomenal facts as effects, he would naturally begin with a table of *motions*. Indeed, he defined Heat as being nothing else but motion, or moving force; a doctrine which our more modern science, from Rumford to Tyndall, confirms. Pursuing the study to the end, he would expect to arrive, in time, at a knowledge of "the last power and cause of nature." But, at first, he would begin with the secondary powers or forces, taking the phenomenal effects as facts, in such subjects as heat and cold, the radiating motions producing impressions at a distance (what are now treated of under the names of light, heat, electricity, magnetism, and the like), sound and hearing, density and rarity, the ebb and flow of the sea, winds, &c. He then comes to the motions of vegetable and animal life, the passions, the senses, the affections, or emotions, and, at last, to the mind itself and the mental faculties. In all this, the inquiry looks to the form or law. Bacon's idea of *form* would seem to have been identical with what we would now call *law* of power giving form to itself.<sup>2</sup> And so this portion of the Tables would span the whole field of sensible and visible motions in nature, beginning with the

<sup>1</sup> *Works* (Boston), VII. 170.

<sup>2</sup> *Trans. of Nov. Org.*, II. 2; *Works* (Boston), VIII. 168; 206.

mind of nature, or thinking power in the Creator, and ending in mind, or finite thinking power in man. The other portion concerned rather the architectural structure of the universe, the greater accidents or relative qualities of essences, the composition of bodies, the species of things, whether vegetable, animal, or mineral, and finally, the lesser accidents, relative qualities or properties of material things; and all this concerned matter as it is presented to observation in nature, as such.

It is plain we were to have Tables of the passions, the senses, the emotions or affections, and the faculties of the mind. There was to be not only a contemplative science, but an active science pointing to practical uses. And these illustrative examples of the Fourth Part may very well have been intended to embrace all branches of this "universal inquisition."

In fact, so much is expressly declared in the *Novum Organum*, thus:—

"It may also be asked (in the way of doubt rather than objection) whether I speak of natural philosophy only, or whether I mean that the other sciences, logic, ethics, and politics, should be carried on by this method. Now I certainly mean what I have said to be understood of them all; and as the common logic, which governs by the syllogism, extends not only to natural but to all sciences; so does mine also, which proceeds by induction, embrace everything. For I form a history and tables of discovery for anger, fear, shame, and the like; for matters political; and again for the mental operations of memory, composition, and division, judgment, and the rest; not less than for cold, or light, or vegetation, or the like. But, nevertheless, since my method of interpretation (after the history has been prepared and duly arranged) regards not the working and discourse of the mind only (as the common logic does), but the nature of things also, I supply the mind with such rules and guidance that it may in every case



apply itself to the nature of things. And, therefore, I deliver many and diverse precepts in the doctrine of Interpretation, which in some measure modify the method of invention according to the quality and condition of the subject of inquiry."<sup>1</sup>

This Fourth Part, then, was not to be strictly a system of psychology, but it was to arrive at a knowledge of the actual nature of things, in a visible representation of the whole process of the mind in the continuous fabric and order of discovery in these special and very noble subjects. The method was to be according to the quality and condition of the subject. He intimates also, that his method cannot be brought down to common apprehension, save by effects and works only. He does not desire to pull down or "destroy the philosophy, arts, and sciences "at present in use," but is glad to see them "used, cultivated, and honored." But he gives "constant and distinct warning, that by the methods now in use, neither can any great progress be made in the doctrines and contemplative part of sciences, nor can they be carried out to any magnitude of works," and that if works of magnitude are to be accomplished in this kind, it must be done in his way. Again, he says, "discoveries are as it were new creations and imitations of God's works, — as well every the part: —

"To man's frail race great Athens once ago  
First gave the seed whence we now our own give,  
And re-created all our life anew."<sup>2</sup>

This same purpose is expressed again, with a still more distinct and unmistakable reference to something of this kind in that introduction or preface to the Fourth Part, which is styled the "leading conductor of the labyrinth of Thread of the Labyrinth," in which he states that these "illustrative examples" "comprehend," more or less, all the

<sup>1</sup> *See Orig. Works Boston, 1846. Vol. 1. p. 114.*

<sup>2</sup> *Works Hunt, 2d ed. Philad. 1846. Vol. 1. p. 114.*

<sup>3</sup> *Works Boston, 1846. Vol. 1.*

form which we think most agreeable to truth, and regard as approved and authorized" [*ut probatam et electam*]. Nor would he regard "the customary fashion" [*more apud homines recepto*] as absolutely necessary in all the parts of this formula, as if they must be one and inviolable; for he did not think the industry and happiness of men were to be bound, as it were, to "a single pillar" [*ad columnam*]. It would seem to be very plain from the whole context, as well as from the use of this figure of the "single pillar," and this reference to the *one and inviolable custom hitherto received among men*, that he meant to allude to that indispensable and inviolable law of unity, which had always been imperiously required as an absolute rule of composition in all dramatic writing, ancient and modern; especially when it is distinctly declared, in the concluding sentence, that the subject, of which he was speaking, was no other than "true art," thus: "Nothing, indeed, need prevent those who possess great leisure, or have surmounted the difficulties infallibly encountered in the beginning of the experiment, from carrying onward the process here pointed out [*rem monstratam*]." On the contrary, it is our firm conviction that true art is always capable of advancing." [*Quin contra, artem veram adolescere statuimus.*"] The translation of "F. W.," taken from the edition of Montagu, is here followed. Mr. Spedding, apparently unable to make out the meaning of this passage, or, perhaps, not looking for this sense of it, seems to think that "this can hardly be what Bacon wrote,"<sup>1</sup> and that possibly the manuscript was imperfect at the end; but certainly, if understood with reference to this view of the subject, it will be found to be in keeping with the main tenor and purport of the whole tract. And probably this was as much as he intended to say then, on that head, and so stopped short there.

Certainly, after this distinct intimation of his intent, we

<sup>1</sup> *Works* (Boston), V. 181, n. (1).

need not be surprised to find the ancient unities almost wholly disregarded in these plays; nor that Coleridge should find them to be a new kind of dramatic romance, differing in *genus* from the ancient drama; nor that they should answer admirably well to Bacon's conception of a representative visible history, a speaking picture, or a type and model of the whole process of the mind, and the continuous fabric and order of discovery in the most noble subjects; nor that they should partake of that sweet travelling through universal variety, which was to be the lot of him who should be able to climb the hill of the Muses.

The "Winter's Tale" and the "Tempest" were both written in 1611. Some critics have supposed that Shakespeare, in the "Tempest," had a special purpose of showing that he could write a play which should strictly observe the ancient unities; while others, like Mr. White, have noticed that the "Winter's Tale" is written in utter defiance of the one and inviolable rule: in this instance, for certain, the author would not be bound to "a single pillar." He puts sixteen years between two acts. Inland countries are brought to the sea. The Delphic Oracle, the King of Sicily, the Emperor of Russia, and psalm-singing Puritans, are made to figure upon the same stage. And the Chorus of the fourth act, in the name of Time, gives such reason for it as at once to remind us of the promised disregard of the *received custom*, thus:—

"*Time.* I that please some, try all, both joy and terror  
Of good and bad, that makes and unfolds error,  
Now take upon me, in the name of Time,  
To use my wings. Impute it not a crime  
To me, or my swift passage, that I slide  
O'er sixteen years, and leave the growth untri'd,  
Of that wide gap; *since it is in my power*  
*To o'erthrow law, and in one self-born hour*  
*To plant and overwhelm custom.* Let me pass  
The same I am, ere ancient'st order was,  
*Or what is now received:* I witness to  
The times that brought them in: so shall I do



The glistening of this present, as my tale  
Now seems to it. Your patience thus allowing,  
I turn my glass, and give my scene such growing  
As you had slept between."

Here is identity in both the thought and the language; and can it be due to accidental coincidence, rather than to the habitual expression of one and the same writer, that we have here, also, the same figure of art *growing* ("*adolescere*") and a scene *growing*? And considering what these models should be, that were to place the whole order and process of discovery in particular subjects before the eyes ("*sub oculos*"), it is, at least, not clear that it could be anything else than precisely what Hamlet demanded of the dramatic art, namely, that it should hold the mirror up to nature; and, according to the interpretation of Professor Gervinus, "that it should give a representation of life, of men and their operating powers, by which means it works indeed morality, but in the purest poetic way, by image, by lively representation, and by imaginative skill. To perceive and to know the virtues and crimes of men, to reflect them as in a mirror, and to exhibit them in their sources, their nature, their workings, and their results, and in such a way as to exclude chance and to banish arbitrary fate, which can have no place in a well-ordered world,—this is the task which Shakespeare has imposed upon the poet and upon himself."<sup>1</sup>

The New Atlantis was written expressly as a pattern of a natural story, and it can scarcely be accounted an accidental circumstance, that this same figure of the "pillar" appears, again, in connection with a pretty comprehensive conception of human works, in that "great miracle" which brought the canonical books of Scripture to the island of Bensalem, "in a great pillar of light," rising from the sea toward heaven, and so approaching the shore; on beholding which, one of the wise men of Solomon's House fel-

<sup>1</sup> *Shakes. Comm.* (London, 1863), I. 325. Trans. by F. E. Bunnett.

upon his knees and began to pray, thus : " Lord God of heaven and earth, thou hast vouchsafed of thy grace, to those of our order, to know the works of creation, and the secrets of them ; and to discern as far as appertaineth to the generations of men, between divine miracles, works of nature, works of art, and impostures and illusions of all sorts."

It will be remembered that Bacon's scheme of philosophy constituted a kind of intellectual globe, or full circle. In that collection of Antitheses, which he speaks of as a youthful labor, he expresses himself thus : " It is good to have the orb of the mind concentric with the universe." Starting from the *Philosophia Prima* with a summary partition of all the knowledge and learning which the human race was in possession of, in his time, it proceeded through the second or experimental and inductive philosophy, until the wheel was come full circle in philosophy itself, which was to be at once a knowledge of all science in a comprehensible theory of the universe, and an active science and an intelligent power of action ; and the whole was to have a practical bearing and effect upon the business, uses, life, and happiness of man. Philosophy itself, the object of the Sixth Part, he says, was to have for its end, not only " contemplative enjoyment, but the common affairs and fortune of mankind, and a complete power of action." The Second Philosophy embraced his entire method, metaphysics included, but more especially, perhaps, as applied to physical science as such ; but it was also to include the whole field of civil, industrial, and social affairs, and the practical life of the individual man, — " whatever, indeed, might administer to the advantage and happiness of mankind." The Sixth Part, to which all the rest was to be subservient and auxiliary, was to culminate in a final and complete philosophy of the universe ; and it was to embrace, so far at least as the power and faculty of the human mind could go, a complete knowledge of " the order, operation, and

mind of Nature." Nor was it to give out a dream of the fancy as a model of the world; but he would rather "pray to God, in his kindness, to vouchsafe to us the means of writing an apocalyptic revelation and true vision of the traces and stamps of the Creator upon his creatures" [creations].<sup>1</sup>

But, doubtless, this Fourth Part, thus devoted to examples, was, in a manner, to span both hemispheres of the intellectual globe, and, springing from the physical as basis and starting ground, reach the height of things in the metaphysical region of universals. And so he tells us here, in this "Scaling Ladder," that he had described the introductory part of the progress in the second book (the *Novum Organum*), which expounded principles and rules for the right use of the understanding in the whole business, and, in the third, had "treated on the phenomena of the universe and on natural history, plunging into and traversing the woodlands, as it were, of Nature, here over-shadowed (as by foliage) with the infinite variety of experiments; there perplexed and entangled (as by thorns and briars) with the subtlety of acute commentations." But now, he would advance "from the woods to the foot of the mountains," reaching "a more disengaged, but a more arduous station." He should "proceed from [natural] history by a firm track, new, indeed, and hitherto unexplored, to universals." To these "paths of contemplation, in truth, might appositely be applied the celebrated and often quoted illustration of the double road of active life, of which one branch, at first even and level, conducted the traveller to places precipitous and impassable; the other, though steep and rough at the entrance, terminated in perfect smoothness. In a similar manner he, who, in the very outset of his inquiries, lays firm hold of certain fixed principles in the science, and, with immovable reliance upon

<sup>1</sup> *Distribution (Plan) of the Work* (Mont.), XIV. 24; Spedd. (Boston) I. 227.



them, disentangles (as he will with little effort) what he handles, if he advances steadily onward, not flinching out of excess either of self-confidence, or of self-distrust, from the object of his pursuit, will find that he is journeying in the first of these two tracks; and if he can endure to suspend his judgment, and to mount gradually, and to climb by regular succession the height of things, like so many tops of mountains, with persevering and indefatigable patience, he will in due time attain the very uppermost elevations of nature [*ad summitates et vertices naturæ*], where his station will be serene, his prospect delightful, and his descent to all the practical arts by a gentle slope perfectly easy.”<sup>1</sup>

The patience and resolution here required may remind us, again, of the saying of Plato, that “the whole of nature being of one kindred, and the soul having before known all things [*i. e.* the Divine Soul, or Mind of Nature], there is nothing to prevent a person [*i. e.* a human soul], who remembers — what men call learning — only one thing, from again discovering all the rest; if he has but courage, and seeking faints not.”<sup>2</sup> In short, it must be borne in mind, that the *Philosophia Prima*, as it were, in advance, dealt with the whole state of knowledge previously existing, in which was included both the metaphysical philosophy of Plato, which, proceeding by the dialectic method of pure scientific thinking, learning all things from one, and arriving at a philosophy of the universe by that way, and also the philosophy of Democritus, Leucippus, and Aristotle, which rather from the beginning turned round and confronted nature face to face, and began to search out a philosophy of the universe, in that direction, by pursuing the paths and methods of physical inquiry. And so, Bacon having for himself arrived, in the first instance, at a philosophy of the universe, in his own mind, by the Platonic method, and,

<sup>1</sup> *Scaling Ladder*, *ib.* XIV. 426; Spedd., V. 180.

<sup>2</sup> *Meno*, *Works of Plato*, (Bohn), III. 20.

after the example of Plato's great disciple, Aristotle, seeing that the best way for the advancement of knowledge, the invention of new sciences, arts, and instruments, for the instruction, benefit, and uses of mankind in general, was, to follow that example, to begin where Democritus left off, and pursue the same direction and course of investigation, confronting Nature face to face, as it were, diligently set himself to work in good earnest to revive, correct, purify, renew, instaurate, and re-invigorate, both the degenerated and perverted Platonism, and the degenerated and perverted Aristotelianism of his own time and all the later ages next preceding. But now, having in the second and third parts plunged into and traversed the woodlands of mere physical nature, amidst foliage, thorns, and briers, and having begun to advance from the woods to the foot of the mountains and that same hill of the Muses, he would, in this Fourth Part, begin to ascend by the double road of active and actual human life, and climbing with scaling ladders of the intellect, and threading the labyrinth of the civil, social, and moral fabric, would endeavor, at last, to reach the uppermost elevations and highest tops of things, in the magnificent temple, palace, city, and hill of the fabled descendants of Neptune, the vertex of Pan's Pyramid, and the cliff of Plato; from which height, no man should any further leading need.

So much we learn from himself concerning this curious Fourth Part. It is difficult to conceive what else was meant than something of this kind, by these examples or types and models; and considering what the entire scope of his philosophical scheme was, the nature of the whole discussion in these particular fragments, and the express declaration that true art was always capable of advancing, the conclusion would seem to be well warranted, that at the date at which the Scaling Ladder was written, something of this kind was running in his mind, and that we actually  
these plays what he had himself done towards this

important part of the Great Instauration of all philosophy.

At the same time, it is not necessarily to be inferred that the plays, when written, were designed actually to form this Fourth Part. It may be, that, in his original plan, this part of the systematic Instauration was to have been written in prose with something of the same rigid investigation and scientific precision as the other parts, but upon the same general subject of the passions and affections, the mental powers and faculties, human character, civil and social affairs, and man and humanity in general; but that for want of time to complete it in that form, he had, later in life, concluded to publish this Folio of 1623, together with the Essays and other writings of a civil and moral nature, and leave them to fill up this gap in the Great Instauration, in such manner and with such effect as they could. The Instauration was indeed the work of his whole life; but the finished parts of it rather belong to his later years. The Advancement was in some measure a preliminary work, and it took the form of the *De Augmentis* before becoming a part of the Great Instauration in 1623, and all the other parts were wholly, or chiefly, written after the period of the plays, and towards the close of his career. So, while the plays may have been written, as they doubtless were, under a natural and genuine poetic feeling and impulse, and even with a design to rival the ancient poets in the field of dramatic art, and with the general purpose of veiling his braver instruction to mankind under the poetic form of delivery, after the manner of all great poets, they are, in fact, at the same time, found to be pervaded with the whole spirit and scope of his philosophy; and they may be safely taken as actual models and true illustrative examples of his method in that kind.

This view may find some special confirmation in the following passages from the *De Augmentis*, which are deserving of careful study in reference to certain prominent



features in the character of these plays ; for in their general nature and scope they more especially concern the regimen, discipline, culture, and cure of the mind in respect of individual, social, moral, and civil or public good ; and truth to human nature and human character has always been noted as a peculiar excellence in them. Upon "*the different characters of natures and dispositions*," this work proceeds thus : —

"And we are not here speaking of the common inclinations either to virtues or vices, but of those which are more profound and radical. And in truth *I cannot sometimes but wonder* that this part of knowledge should for the most part be omitted both in Morality and Polity, considering it might shed such a ray of light on both sciences. In the traditions of astrology men's natures and dispositions are not unaptly distinguished according to the predominances of the planets ; —

['a breath thou art,  
Servile to all the skye's influences  
That dost this habitation where thou keep'st  
Hourly inflict.' — *Meas. for M.*, Act III. Sc. 1.]

For some are naturally formed for contemplation, others for business, others for war, others for advancement of fortune, others for love, others for the arts, others for a varied kind of life ; so among the poets (heroic, satiric, tragic, comic) are everywhere interspersed representations of characters, though generally exaggerated and surpassing the truth. . . .

"Not however that I would have these characters presented in ethics (as we find them in history or poetry or even in common discourse), in the shape of complete individual portraits, but rather the several features and simple lineaments of which they are composed, and by the various combinations and arrangements of which all characters whatever are made up, showing how many, and of what nature these are, and how connected and subordinate one

to another; that so we may have *a scientific and accurate dissection of minds and characters, and the secret dispositions of particular men may be revealed*; and that from the knowledge thereof better rules may be framed for the treatment of the mind.

"And not only should *the characters of dispositions which are impressed by nature* be received into this treatise, but those also which are imposed on the mind by sex, by age, by region, by health and sickness, by beauty and deformity, and the like; and again, those which are caused by fortune, as sovereignty, nobility, obscure birth, riches, want, magistracy, privacy, prosperity, adversity, and the like. For we see that Plautus maketh it a wonder to see an old man beneficent: His beneficence is that of a young man."

And so, in the "Measure for Measure," in which these ideas and doctrines are in part and very admirably exemplified, the Duke says:—

"Angelo had never the purpose to corrupt her; only he hath made an assay of her virtue, *to practise his judgment with the disposition of natures*. . . The assault that Angelo hath made to you, fortune hath conveyed to my understanding; and, but that frailty hath examples for his falling, *I should wonder at Angelo*." — *Act III. Sc. 1.*

He next proceeds to those "affections and perturbations of the mind, which are, as I have said, the diseases of the mind":—

"*Claud.* Has he affections in him,  
That thus can make him bite the law by th' nose,  
When he would force it?" — *Act III. Sc. 1.*

"But to speak the real truth," he continues, "the poets and writers of history are the best doctors of this knowledge, where we may find *^* painted forth with great life and dissected, how affections are kindled and excited, and how pacified and restrained, and how again contained from act and further degree:—

[*Isab.* Ay! just: perpetual durance: a restraint—  
Though all the world's vastidity you had—  
To a determin'd scope." — *Ib. Act III. Sc. 1.*]

how they disclose themselves though repressed and concealed ; how they work ; how they vary ; how they are enwrapped one within another ; how they fight and encounter one with another ; and many other particularities of this kind ; amongst which this last is of special use in moral and civil matters ; how I say, to set affection against affection, and to use the aid of one to master another ; like hunters and fowlers who use to hunt beast with beast, and catch bird with bird :"<sup>1</sup> — as we may find it illustrated in this same play, and, indeed, in many others of this author, in such style, manner, and diction as to leave no room for doubt of his identity.

It is not the purpose of this work to undertake by any complete analysis, or anything like a thorough exposition of the nature, scope, and drift of the several plays, to show in what manner and to what extent the object and intent of these illustrative examples, or models, have been accomplished in them ; nor to consider of their merits as works of art. In the two sections following, some demonstration will be given out of the "As You Like It," and the "Timon of Athens," as models and instances, first, that these plays were in fact written by Francis Bacon ; and second, that they do really answer the purpose supposed, in a very admirable manner. More than this might require another book.

## § 2. THE AS YOU LIKE IT — A MODEL.

The comedy of "As You Like It" appears to have been written about the year 1600, and before any of the works of Bacon with which it will be compared were published, viz. : the Advancement, the Intellectual Globe, the Natural History, the History of Life and Death, and the *De Augmentis*. Shakespeare could have drawn nothing for this play from these works of Bacon : nor would Bacon have

<sup>1</sup> *Trans. of De Aug.*, by Spedding, *Works* (Boston), IX. 219-221.



need to learn anything from William Shakespeare, touching the parts of philosophy therein illustrated.

In the main, this play is a story of love and friendship, with some slight exhibition of the accidents of fortune, into which the more important matters and topics are, as it were, collaterally and incidentally interwoven. The plot is taken from Dr. Lodge's novel of "*Rosalynd, or Euphues' Golden Legacy*," but nothing of the more distinguishing features, or more notable instruction, is drawn from that source; and the characters of Jaques, Audrey, and the Clown, are wholly new. The author himself speaks more especially in the melancholy Jaques, in *Touchstone*, the motley-minded gentleman, and in *Rosalind*, instructed of the "great magician"; and the old man Adam furnishes occasion for the discourse of Jaques on the Seven Ages, with a distinct touch of the *History of Life and Death*. In the garb of the motley fool, *Touchstone*, who is but another specimen of a "Jove in a thatch'd house," that

"hath strange places cramm'd  
With observation, the which he vents  
In mangled forms,"

lies concealed and (as it were in ambush) the "natural philosopher" himself, with his instances; and with the help of Audrey, a mere "country wench," he will get pretty deep into the philosophy of imagination and the true nature of poetry as "imaginations feigned." *Rosalind*, in the disguise of a boy, has conversed with a magician, since he was three years old:—

"Orl. But, my good lord, this boy is forest-born,  
And hath been tutor'd in the rudiments  
Of many desperate studies by his uncle,  
Whom he reports to be a great magician,  
Obscured in the circle of this forest." — *Act V. Sc. 4.*

And in Jaques, we have a man, who has got well out of "the woodlands of nature," and not only reached the foot of the mountain, but actually ascended nearly to the uppermost elevations, where his station is serene, and his prospect

delightful ; and though his "often rumination" has gained him, among others, the title of "the melancholy Jaques," it only wraps himself in "a most humourous sadness." The matter lies, for the most part, upon "a more disengaged but a more arduous station," and in that part of "the double road of active life," which, though "steep and rough" at the entrance, becomes "even and level" at the end, terminating in "perfect smoothness"; but the scene, though not actually in "the woods," now, is still "partly in the Forest of Arden." Rosalind is banished by the envious Duke ; Celia, his daughter, her loving friend, determines to escape with her cousin, and they persuade the fool Touchstone to go with them ; and so, disguised, Rosalind in boy's clothes, Celia in the dress of a shepherdess, and Touchstone as servant, they become travellers in the woods :—

"*Ros.* Well, this is the Forest of Arden.

"*Touch.* Ay, now am I in Arden: the more fool I! When I was at home, I was in a better place: but travellers must be content."—*Act II. Sc. 4.*

Remembering that the road traversing "the woodlands" was overshadowed as by foliage, and perplexed and entangled with thorns and briers, and that one branch of the double road conducted the traveller to places precipitous and impassable, we may just notice, that the dialogue between Celia and Rosalind, in the beginning, turns upon the condition of their estates ; but, says Rosalind, "Fortune reigns in gifts of the world, not in the lineaments of nature;" and they soon discover that these "paths of contemplation" are beset with thorns and briers, thus :—

"*Ros.* O, how full of briars is this working-day world!

*Cel.* They are but burs, cousin, thrown upon thee in holiday foolery; if we walk not in the trodden paths, our very petticoats will catch them."—*Act I. Sc. 3.*

So Bacon says :—

"Diligence and careful preparation remove the obstacles against which the foot would otherwise stumble, and smooth the path before it is entered :

But he who is sluggish and defers everything to the last moment of execution must needs walk every step as it were amidst briars and thorns, which catch and stop him." — *Tr. of De Aug.*, IX. Spedd. (Boston), 257.

And Orlando, groping with old Adam in this "uncouth forest," almost dead "for food," meeting the Duke, speaks thus : —

"Orl. Speak you so gently? Pardon me, I pray you:  
I thought that all things had been *savage here*;  
And therefore put I on the countenance  
Of stern commandment. But whate'er you are  
That in *this desert inaccessible*,  
Under the *shade of melancholy boughs*,  
Lose and neglect the *creeping hours of time*; —

You touch'd my vein at first: *the thorny point*  
Of bare distress hath ta'en from me the shew  
Of *smooth* civility: yet am I inland bred,  
And know some nurture." — *Act II. Sc. 7.*

Things here were steep, rough, thorny, overshadowed with foliage and melancholy boughs, and rather precipitous and impassable to the traveller.

Orlando introduces the old man Adam thus : —

"There is an old poor man,  
Who after me hath many a weary step  
Limp'd in pure love; till he be first suffic'd,  
(Oppress'd with two weak evils, age and hunger,)  
I will not touch a bit." — *Act II. Sc. 7.*

And while he is gone to find him out, the Duke and Jaques enter into that famous and very sage discourse upon the Seven Ages of the life of man, taking a wide and deep view of the subject. The Duke begins thus : —

"Duke S. Thou seest we are not all alone unhappy:  
This wide and universal theatre  
Presents more woful pageants than the scene  
Wherein we play in."

Jaques, who has already climbed by regular succession the height of things to a station serene, where he has a prospect of the order of nature and the errors of men, on this universal theatre, and has been a traveller through the universal variety, proceeds to deliver himself of his latest con-



templation on the ages of man, in the following manner, which may be compared with the Essay of the Vicissitude of Things (first printed in 1625), which was derived in part from the History of Life and Death, namely : —

"In the youth of a state arms do flourish; in the middle age of a state, learning; and then both of them together for a time; in the declining age of a state, mechanical arts and merchandize. Learning hath its infancy, when it is almost childish; then its youth, when it is luxuriant and juvenile; then its strength of years, when it is solid and reduced [*"solidiores et exactiores"*]; and lastly, its old age, when it waxeth dry and exhaust [*"postremo senectus earum obrepit, cum sicca et exhausta fiunt, manente tamen garrulitate"*]; but it is not good to look too long upon these turning wheels of vicissitude, lest we become giddy."

Take, now, the speech of Jaques, with the passages interspersed by way of commentary, thus : —

"Jaq. All the world 's a stage,  
And all the men and women merely players:  
They have their exits and their entrances;  
And one man in his time plays many parts, —  
His Acts being seven ages."

[There were four ages of a state. "Meanwhile, the mind also hath certain periods, but they cannot be described by years." — *Hist. of Life and Death*.

"While states and empires pass many periods." — *Mosque*.

"While your life is nothing but a continual acting upon a stage." — *Ibid.*]

"At first, the Infant,  
Mewling and puking in his nurse's arms:  
And then, the whining School-boy, with his satchel  
And shining morning face, creeping like snail  
Unwillingly to school " : —

["Learning, too, hath its infancy"; . . . "then its youth, when it is luxuriant and juvenile."

"The ladder of man's body is this, to be conceived, . . . to suck, to be weaned, to feed upon pap." — *Hist. of Life and Death*.]

"And then the Lover,  
Sighing like furnace, with a woful ballad  
Made to his mistress' eyebrow: Then a Soldier,  
Full of strange oaths and bearded like the pard;  
Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel,  
Seeking the bubble Reputation  
Even in the cannon's mouth: And then the Justice,  
In fair round belly with good capon lin'd;  
With eyes severe and beard of formal cut,

Full of wise saws and modern instances,—  
And so he plays his part":—

[—"then succeeds the manly age, when it becomes more solid and exact," says the Latin.]

"The sixth age shifts  
Into the lean and slipper'd Pantaloon,  
With spectacles on nose and pouch on side;  
His youthful hose well sav'd, a world too wide  
For his shrunk shank; and his big manly voice,  
Turning again toward childish treble, pipes  
And whistles in his sound":—

[—"and lastly, its old age, when it waxeth dry and exhaust," or, as the Latin reads, "Lastly, its old age creeps on, when it becomes dry and exhaust, garrulity only remaining."]

"Last scene of all,  
That ends this strange eventful history,  
Is second childishness and mere oblivion;  
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans—everything."

Act II. Sc. 7.

[“But it is not good to look too long upon these turning wheels of vicissitude, lest we become giddy.”]

Here, there is resemblance in the thought, manner, and word, but not any absolute identity: the similitude is rather distant and remote, as we should expect to find it in writings so different in character, even the subject being not the same. As will be seen, the Latin translation comes nearer to the very language of the poetry than the English original of the Essay; and upon a close study, it is pretty evident that, in the scientific study of the “Differences of Youth and Old Age,” and in the “History of Life and Death,” may be found the actual first origin of both the poetry and the prose. The general ideas are certainly very similar, the difference of the subject in the Essay necessarily occasioning some variations and omissions of particulars. The manner is nearly the same in both, and the turn of expression, and use of words, is alike in both; as for instance, the words *creep*, *manly voice* and *manly age*, *severe* and *exact*, *garrulity* and *childish treble*, *this strange eventful history* and *the turning wheels of vicissitude*. And then we have the same order and succession of the like ideas as far as they

go, with that difference of diction, and greater amplitude, which the nature of the subject, the exigencies of verse, and the poetic style demanded.

Jaques exhibits a very remarkable liking for the fool Touchstone, —

“ Who laid him down, and bask’d him in the sun,  
And rail’d on Lady Fortune in good terms,  
In good set terms, — and yet a motley fool ; ” —

but when he heard him moralize upon the time, he laughed a whole hour by his dial, —

“ That Fools should be so deep-contemplative.”

And well he might ; for this fool’s brain is crammed with observation, his head is full of instances, and he appears, like many of this author’s fools, to have much knowledge in many arts, though “ ill-inhabited ” : —

*“Jaq.* This is the motley-minded gentleman, that I have so often met in the forest: he hath been a courtier he swears.

*Touch.* If any man doubt that, let him put me to my purgation.”

Then follows a sharp piece of satirical criticism upon Vincentio Saviolo’s code of honor ; but what is more particularly to be noted in this connection is, that the moralizing Jaques, who understands so well the many parts which man plays on the universal theatre, considering the wisdom “ which he vents in mangled forms,” is ready to exclaim : —

*“Jaq.* O, that I were a Fool!  
I am ambitious for a motley coat.  
*Duke S.* Thou shalt have one.  
*Jaq.* It is my only suit:  
Provided that you weed your better judgments  
Of all opinion that grows rank in them,  
That I am wise. I must have liberty  
Withal, as large a charter as the wind,  
To blow on whom I please: for so fools have.” — *Act II. Sc. 7.*

Here is certainly a very good reason why this author should be so much in the habit of putting the profoundest conclusions of his philosophy into the mouths of his clowns and fools ; and in a larger view, it may have been for a some-



what similar reason that such a writer should choose the dramatic form of delivery for the purpose of communicating his braver instruction to mankind. In that age, especially, he needed liberty; and his Genius must have the air of Freedom:—

"*Jaq.* Give me leave  
To speak my mind, and I will through and through  
Cleave the foul body of th' infected world,  
If they will patiently receive my medicine." — *Act II. Sc. 7.*

Touchstone proceeds with the shepherd, Corin, thus:—

"*Touch.* Hast any philosophy in thee, shepherd?

*Cor.* No more, but that I know, the more one sickens, the more at ease he is; and that he that wants money, means, and content, is without three good friends: That the property of rain is to wet, and fire to burn: That good pasture makes fat sheep; and that a great cause of the night is lack of the sun: That he that hath learned no wit by Nature, nor Art, may complain of good breeding, or comes of a very dull kindred.

*Touch.* Such a one is a natural philosopher." — *Act III. Sc. 2.*

Next, the dispute on good manners and the manners of courtiers and shepherds winds up with a challenge for instances:—

"*Touch.* Instance, briefly; come, instance." — *Act III. Sc. 2.*

And this is followed by a call for "a better instance," "a more sounder instance," and "a mended instance," very much after the manner of our natural philosopher himself:—

"*Jaq.* Is not this a rare fellow, my lord? he's as good at anything, and yet a Fool.

*Duke S.* He uses his folly like a stalking-horse, and under the presentation of that, he shoots his wit."

So says Bacon to Essex, "You discourse well *Quid igitur agendum est?* I will shoot my fool's bolt, since you will have it so."

Jaques had been a traveller, too, and his sadness was of a peculiar kind:—

"*Ros.* They say you are a melancholy fellow.

*Jaq.* I am so: I do love it better than laughing."

Rosalind thinks all such must be "abominable fellows," but Jaques, that it is "good to be sad and say nothing":—

"*Ros.* Why then it is good to be a post." — *Act IV. Sc. 1.*

This may remind the critical reader of Bacon's discussion of individual good or happiness, which might consist in a certain "equality" of things, or in "variety and vicissitude," or in both; and he alludes to the controversy between Socrates and the Sophist, in which Socrates maintained that happiness consisted in a constant peace of mind and tranquillity; but the Sophist, that it consisted in having an appetite for much and in enjoying much. The Sophist said, that Socrates' happiness was that of "a post or a stone" ("*stipitis vel lapidis*")<sup>1</sup>; and Socrates, that the Sophist's happiness was that of a man that had the itch ("*scabiosi*"), who was perpetually itching and scratching; and this last breaks out, again, in another place, thus:—

"*Marcus.* What's the matter, you dissentious rogues,  
That rubbing the poor itch of your opinion,  
Make yourselves scabs? . . . . Who deserves greatness  
Deserves your hate; and your affections are  
A sick man's appetite, who desires most that  
Which would increase his evil." — *Cor., Act I. Sc. 1.*

Jaques answers:—

"I have neither the Scholar's melancholy, which is emulation; nor the Musician's, which is fantastical; nor the Courtier's, which is proud; nor the Soldier's, which is ambitious; nor the Lawyer's, which is politic; nor the Lady's, which is nice; nor the Lover's, which is all these: but it is a melancholy of mine own, compounded of many simples, extracted from many objects, and, indeed, the sundry contemplation of my travels, in which my often rumination wraps me in a most humourous sadness.

*Ros.* A traveller! . . . .

*Jaq.* Yes; I have gained my experience." — *Act IV. Sc. 1.*

Very like the philosopher, who had found "the different characters of natures" omitted in "Morality and Policy," but thought there might be something of truth in the traditions of astrology and the predominances of the planets: for, as we remember, "some are naturally formed for con-

<sup>1</sup> *De Aug.*, Lib. VII. ; (Boston), III. 24.

temptation, others for business, others for war, others for advancement of fortune, others for love, others for the arts, others for a varied kind of life"; as had been represented among the poets, heroic, satiric, tragic, and comic.

And a traveller he was, no doubt, this "Monsieur Traveller," through the universal variety, to whom, in his elevated station on the mountain top, the common affairs and most ordinary compliments of mankind below, were so sadly amusing, that, on the whole, they might even be compared to "the encounter of two dog-apes." Nevertheless, he had a fellow-feeling for the

—"poor sequester'd stag,  
That from the hunter's aim had ta'en a hurt,"

and came to languish by

"the brook that brawls along this wood; . . . .  
. . . . — and, indeed, my lord,  
The wretched animal heav'd forth such groans  
That their discharge did stretch his leathern coat  
Almost to bursting; and the big round tears  
Coursed one another down his innocent nose  
In piteous chase: and thus the hairy fool,  
Much mark'd of the melancholy Jaques,  
Stood on the extremest verge of the swift brook,  
*Augmenting it with tears.*

*Duke S.* But what said Jaques?  
Did he not moralize this spectacle?

*1 Lord.* O, yes, into a thousand similes.  
First, for his weeping into the needless stream,  
'*Poor deer,*' quoth he, '*thou mak'st a testament  
As worldlings do, giving thy sum of more  
To that which had too much.*' Then, being there alone,  
Left and abandon'd of his velvet friends;  
'*'T is right,*' quoth he; '*this misery doth part  
The flux of company.*' Anon, a careless herd,  
Full of the pasture, jumps along by him,  
And never stays to greet him. '*Ay,*' quoth Jaques  
'*Sweep on, you fat and greasy citizens;  
'T is just the fashion: Wherefore do you look  
Upon that poor and broken bankrupt there?*'  
Thus most invectively he pierceth through  
The body of the country, city, court,  
Yes, and of this our life." — *Act II. Sc. 1.*



But the road in this model, is to come out "even and level" at the end, being the one of "the two moral ways" of the old parable, beginning with uncertainty and difficulty and ending in plainness and certainty" (*Valer. Term. ch. 19*); and so, all terminates in perfect smoothness by the skill of the great magician:—

*Fla.* I have promised to make all this matter even.  
 Keep you your word, O Duke, to give your daughter;—  
 You young Orlando, to receive his daughter:—  
 Keep you your word, Phoebe, that you'll marry me,  
 Or else, refusing me, to wed this shepherd:—  
 Keep your word, Silvius, that you'll marry her,  
 If she refuse me:—and from hence I go,  
 To make these doubts all even. . . . .

*Hymen.* That is their mirth in Heaven,  
 When earthly things made even  
 Atone together."—*Act V. Sc. 4.*

At last, the usurping Duke

"hath put on a religious life,  
 And thrown into neglect the pompous Court.  
*Jaq.* To him will I: out of these convertites  
 There is much matter to be heard and learned."—*Act V. Sc. 4.*

This final disposition of the melancholy Jaques, whose prospect had become so sadly humorous and so serenely delightful, is in fair keeping with Bacon's vision of the highest state of things in the island of Bensalem, in the New Atlantis, on beholding which the Strangers, who had arrived there, imagined they saw before their eyes "a picture of their own salvation in heaven"; and his betaking himself, at last, to "these convertites," and devoting himself to a religious life, may recall to mind what has been reported of one of the rarest and most humorously sad men of learning of our time, that now, in his later days, he finds his chiefest solace in the "*Acta Sanctorum*."

### § 3. THE TIMON OF ATHENS — A MODEL.

Of the "Timon of Athens," nothing appears to be known, until it was printed in the Folio of 1623. The story of

Timon was one of the traditional popular tales of ancient times. It is briefly alluded to, in Plutarch's *Life of Antony*; but scarcely anything more than the circumstance of the inscription upon the tomb of Timon and the bare names of Alcibiades and Apemantus, which are not found in Lucian, appear to have been taken from Plutarch; while the character of Apemantus was evidently founded upon the Thrasycles of Lucian's dialogue. Shakespeare could have derived but little help from North's Plutarch, and Bacon was undoubtedly well acquainted with both Plutarch and Lucian in the original Greek. In the *Essay of Goodness*, he alludes to the anecdote of the tree as told in Plutarch, and speaks of "misanthropi, that make it their practice to bring men to the bough, and yet have never a tree for the purpose in their gardens, as Timon had." Plutarch refers to the comedies of Aristophanes and to Plato for the story of Timon; but the larger part of the borrowed materials for this play was certainly drawn from Lucian. In Aristophanes,<sup>1</sup> as in Plato, there is no more than a bare allusion to the story. Bacon is known to have been familiar with these authors, neither of which had been translated (so far as known at this day) until after the time of Shakespeare. The similitudes with his writings are most apparent in those parts of the story which vary from the account of Plutarch, or were not derived from him. The circumstance of Timon's finding great sums of gold, while digging with a spade, must have been taken from Lucian. It is pretty certain that the play never made any figure upon the stage, in the lifetime of Shakespeare, if indeed it had ever appeared at all before it was printed; for there is no certain mention of it on record prior to that date. Yet it is one of the most masterly works of the great poet, not so much for display upon the stage, but as implying the largest wisdom, a matured experience, and a most profound philosophy of human life. Even on the supposition that the old play of

<sup>1</sup> *Δυσιστρατη*, 805-828.

that name was an early sketch of this author, it would necessarily follow, that it had been taken up again at a later period of his life, and had been carefully re-written in the maturity of his powers. This play, more strongly than almost any other in the series, bears upon its face the impress and character of Bacon's mind. It is even probable that, in respect of the sentiments and feeling exhibited in some parts of it, something may have been derived from the later experience and fortunes of his own life; when he was himself a fallen lord, abandoned by troops of trencher-friends, yet attended by faithful stewards even in his worst misfortunes; when he had gone to a cell, and become a cloistered friar in Gray's Inn, and was gathering up the wrecks and remnants of his ruined estates, but when he appeared in public, still showing a handsome equipage and a numerous retinue, "scorning to go out in a snuff," said Prince Charles, when he met him in full trim on the road; when he had been fleeced (according to Mr. Meautys), first, of York House, and then of one valuable estate after another; but to a proposal for the sale of his forest at Gorhambury, indignantly answering, "I will not be stript of my feathers," — like another Lear, insisting upon his full hundred, —

"O, reason not the need: our basest beggars  
Are in the poorest thing superfluous;  
Allow not nature more than nature needs;  
Man's life is cheap as beast's;" —

when he had himself become an experienced witness of the vanities of great place, the iniquities of "the yellow slave," gold, the hollowness of all outward show of worldly greatness, and the essential worthlessness of all these to a great soul, as Lucian says:— "Nothing of all this being at all necessary to a good man and one able to see the wealth of philosophy" —; and when he had become still more profoundly sensible of the dark clouds of error and superstition and all manner of false opinion and belief, which like that



old incubus, "the brooding wing of Night," hung lowering as ever over society and all human affairs. He had been a learned critic in literature, a scientific student of nature, and a comprehensive and very profound philosopher, and he had now become a wise man, a seer, a prophet, and certainly one of the greatest of poets.

Still bearing in mind what has been said of these illustrative examples, we shall have occasion, also, to remember that pattern of a natural story, and *model* of an institution "for the interpreting of nature, and the production of great and marvellous works for the benefit of men," in the New Atlantis. Solomon's House, which was instituted "for the finding out of the true nature of all things, whereby God might have the more glory in the workmanship of them," and which was to be "the noblest foundation that ever was upon the earth," and "the eye" and "the lantern of this kingdom," is introduced with an allusion to the poetical fable of "the inhabitants of the great Atlantis," who were "the descendants of Neptune," with their "magnificent temple, palace, city, and hill; and the manifold streams of goodly navigable rivers, which, as so many chains, environed the same site and temple; and the several degrees of ascent, whereby men did climb up the same, as if it had been a Scala Cœli." This island, moreover, was "a land of magicians." There was in it, too, "something supernatural, but yet rather as angelical than magical." And it is further said: "God surely is manifested in this land." Said the Strangers, on arriving there, "It seemed to us, that we were come into a land of angels."

Let it be observed, also, that there was, in this island, "a most natural, pious, and reverend custom of the feast of the family," showing the nation to be "compounded of all goodness." The strangers who had arrived there, went abroad to see "the city and places adjacent," and made the acquaintance of many "not of the meanest quality." The people were full of "piety and humanity," and for

"chastity," this nation was "the virgin of the world." In their own country, "such humanity" was never seen. There was no "confusion" among this people. Their "manners and conditions" were well-ordered. Indeed, "if there be a mirrour of the world worthy to hold men's eyes, it is that country." It was granted to the father of a family of thirty persons, called the Tirsan, to make "a feast" at the cost of the state. He is assisted by "the governor," and also "taketh three of such friends as he liketh to choose." The persons of the family are summoned to attend. Two days the Tirsan sits in "consultation concerning the good estate of the family." Order is taken for the relief of the distressed and decayed, and "competent means to live" are provided for them. Vice and ill-courses are censured. They have "no stews, no dissolute houses, no courtezans, nor anything of that kind." Direction is given "touching marriages." Marriage, "without consent of parents," they "mulct in the inheritors." There is not "such chastity in any people": and they say, "That whosoever is unchaste cannot reverence himself": and they say, "That the reverence of a man's self is, next religion, the chiefest bridle of all vices." The "orders and decrees" of the Tirsan are obeyed: "such reverence and obedience they give to the order of nature."

At the feast, the Tirsan comes forth from divine service into "the large room where the feast is celebrated," and takes his chair of state on a raised "half-pace," at the upper end. All the lineage place themselves around "against the wall," and the room below the half-pace is full of company, "the friends of the family." On the sides are tables for the guests that are bidden. A herald takes in his hand a scroll, which is the king's charter containing gift of revenue, and many privileges, exemptions, and points of honor, directed "To such a one our well beloved friend and creditor." And there is an acclamation, "Happy are the people of Bensalem!" Toward the end of dinner, hymns of "excellent

poesy" are sung; and "dinner being done," the Tirsan calls out two of his "sons of eminent merit and virtue," and bestows on each "a jewel," which they ever after "wear in the front of their turban or hat." This done, "they fall to music and dances and other recreations." So much for the feast, which may be compared a little, below, with "the feast of Lord Timon."

Now, turning to the play, the scene is "Athens; and the woods adjoining." For, in this model, we are to emerge from the woods, again, to "the foot of the mountains," and thence, to ascend toward the height of things in "the commonwealth of Athens"; in which we shall see, also, "how the culture and cure of the mind of man" depend upon "points of nature" and "points of fortune."<sup>1</sup> The first act opens with a scene, in which the poet, the painter, the merchant, the jeweller, and the philosopher, are brought upon the stage together, and the principal topic seems to be our very subject here, namely, "true art." Each one brings an offering of service to the great Lord Timon. In the beginning of the dialogue, the ideas and expressions which are used so forcibly call to mind, not only the teachings of Bacon on poesy, nature, and art, but also the manner and diction of the Dedication and Preface to the Folio of 1623, as to raise a strong suspicion, at least, that both were written by the same hand and at about the same time. Compare the sentences as follows:—

"Act I. Sc. 1. *Athens. A Hall in TIMON'S House.*

*Poet.* How goes the world?

*Paint.* It wears, sir, as it grows.

*Poet.* Ay, that's well known;  
But what particular rarity? what strange,  
Which manifold record not matches?

["Whilst we study to be thankful in our particular."—*Ded.*]

*Mer.* O, 't is a worthy lord.

*Jew.* Nay, that's most fix'd.

<sup>1</sup> *Adv. of Learn.*, Bk. II.



*Mer.* A most incomparable man; breath'd, as it were,  
To an untirable and continue goodness:—

[“To the most noble and incomparable paire of brethren, . . . . and  
our singular good lords.”—*Ded.*

“A king of incomparable clemency, and whose heart is inscrutable for  
wisdom and goodness.”—*Submission.*]

*Paint.* You are rapt, sir, in some work, some dedication  
To the great lord.”

[“And while we name them trifles, we have deprived ourselves of the  
defence of our dedication.”—*Ded.*]

*Poet.* A thing slipp'd idly from me.  
Our poesy is as a gum, which oozes  
From whence 't is nourished: The fire i' the flint  
Shews not, till it be struck; our gentle flame  
Provokes itself, and, like a current, flies  
Each bound it chafes. What have you there?

[“Country hands reach forth milke, creame, fruits, as what they have;  
and many Nations (we have heard) that had not gummes and incense,  
obtained their request with a leavened cake.”—*Ded.*

Lucian's Timon reads:—

“I come to bring you a new song of the lately-taught dithyrambics.”<sup>1</sup>

“There were under the Law (excellent King) both daily sacrifices and  
free-will offerings.”—*Ded. of the Adv.*]

*Paint.* A picture, sir. And when comes your book forth?

*Poet.* Upon the heels of my presentment, sir.

Let's see your piece.

[“It hath been the highest of our care, who are the Presenters, to make  
the present worthy of your Highnesses by the perfection.”—*Ded.*

“In like manner there belongeth to kings from their servants both tribute  
of duty and presents of affection.”—*Ded. of the Adv.*]

*Paint.* 'T is a good piece.

*Poet.* So 't is; this comes off well, and excellent.

*Paint.* Indifferent.

*Poet.* Admirable! How this grace  
Speaks his own standing; what a mental power  
This eye shoots forth; how big imagination  
Moves in this lip; to the dumbness of the gesture  
One might interpret.

[If he were a good “interpreter of nature”: and “if it be true that the  
principal part of beauty is in decent motion.”—*Essay.*]

<sup>1</sup> *Luciani Opera* (Tauchnitz, Lipsie, 1858,) I. 30.

*Paint.* It is a pretty mocking of the life.

Here is a touch; Is 't good?

*Poet.* I'll say of it,

It tutors nature: artificial strife

Lives in these touches, livelier than life.

[—“(for I must ascribe your commendation to affection, being above my merit,) as I must do contrary to that that painters do; for they desire to make the picture to the life, and I must endeavour to make the life to the picture.” — *Letter*, 1619.

—“as if art were some different thing from nature, and artificial from natural.” — *Adv.*

“But because there be so many good painters, both for hand and colours, it needeth but encouragement and instructions to give life unto it.” — *Letter to Chan.*

—“Who, as he was a happie imitator of nature, was a most gentle expresser of it.” — *Ded.*]

*Tim.* Good morrow to thee, gentle Apemantus!

There are some indications in this play that the “gentle Apemantus,” under the covert garb of a “churlish philosopher,” was rather intended to speak, under cover, for the “gentle Shakespeare” himself. “What Shakespeare’s thoughts on God, Nature, and Art, would have been,” says Carlyle, “especially had he lived to number fourscore years, were curious to know.” Most certainly so; but, in the course of this play, assuredly, something may be gathered, by close inspection, as to what were the ideas of the author on some points in art and philosophy; and they seem to have a remarkable agreement, in respect of some particulars of idea and expression, with Bacon’s notions on the subject, as may be seen in this passage from the *Essay of Beauty* (1612):—

“In beauty, that of favour is more than that of colour; and that of decent and gracious motion more than that of favour. That is the best part of beauty, which a picture cannot express; nor the first sight of life. There is no excellent beauty that hath not some strangeness in the proportion. A man cannot tell whether Apelles or Albert Durer were the more trifler; whereof the one would

make a personage by geometrical proportions; the other, by taking the best parts out of divers faces to make one excellent. Such personages, I think, would please nobody but *the painter that made them*. Not but I think a painter may make a better face than ever was; but he must do it by a kind of felicity (as a musician that maketh an excellent air in music), and not by rule. A man shall see faces, that if you examine them part by part, you shall find never a good; and yet altogether do well. If it be true that the principal part of beauty is in decent motion, certainly it is no marvel though persons in years seem many times more amiable."

Understanding that Apemantus contemplated the universe, as it is herein supposed that Bacon himself did, as the actual thought of a Creative Thinker, and as essentially and to the very bottom Artist-Mind work, and that the highest beauty is in life and motion, there may be discovered in this scene a profound opinion of the true nature of the highest art:—

"*Tim.* How likest thou this picture, Apemantus?

*Apem.* The best, for the innocence.

*Tim.* Wrought he not well, that painted it?

*Apem.* He wrought better *that made the painter*;

And yet he's but a filthy piece of work." — *Act I. Sc. 1.*

This remark, apparently so very cynical, and perhaps intended so to appear on the surface, may find a deeper interpretation by the light of another very cynical philosopher: "Do you think those who make senseless and motionless statues are more to be wondered at than those who make active and intelligent living animals? No, by Jupiter; since these are made, not by chance, but by intellect."<sup>1</sup> Other poets followed the "customary fashion" and men's opinions: he followed the order of divine providence, the truth of nature, that true art which is always capable of advancing, and his own opinions:—

<sup>1</sup> *Xen. Mem. Socratis*, Lib. I. c. 4.



"*Apem.* Yes, he is worthy of thee, and to pay thee for thy labor; he that loves to be flattered is worthy o' the flatterer. Heavens, that I were a lord!"

Here, too, is his opinion of the mere man of traffic:—

"*Apem.* Traffic confound thee, if the gods do not!

*Mer.* If traffic do it, the gods do it.

*Apem.* Traffic's thy god, and thy god confound thee!"

This merchant may remind us of the merchant Jew in the New Atlantis, with this difference, that, here, it is the man whose god is traffic, but there, it is "the good Jew."

The play continues thus:—

"*Tim.* How dost thou like this jewel, Apemantus?

*Apem.* Not so well as plain dealing, which will not cost a man a doit.

*Tim.* What dost thou think 't is worth?

*Apem.* Not worth my thinking."—*Act I. Sc. 1.*

Timon has not yet emerged from those mines and caves, where gold and jewels are the chief treasure. Apemantus would seem to have reached the uppermost elevations of nature and those "tops of mountains," where the serenity of his contemplations was not to be disturbed by any consideration of such low things. And here, again, we have this philosopher's judgment on ostentatious piety and prayer:—

"*Apem.* Immortal gods, I crave no pelf;  
I pray for no man but myself."

To some, this might appear to be in the highest degree impious, as Timon thought another saying of the churlish philosopher to be "a lascivious apprehension"; to which Apemantus replies:—

"So thou apprehend'st it. Take it for thy labour."

Or, by possibility, it might put them in mind of another more modern philosopher, likewise suspected of being somewhat cynical, who seems to have apprehended many things differently from the common way; for, being of the same opinion, doubtless, that this author was, when he made the Duke in the disguise of "power divine" say, "there is so great a fever on goodness, that the dissolution of it must

cure it," so he says: "There is no odor so bad as that which arises from goodness tainted. (If I knew for a certainty that a man was coming to my house with the conscious design of doing me good, I should run for my life."<sup>1</sup>) So Apemantus seems to have thought a man had enough to do to pray for himself; and perhaps, also, he had that reverence for himself, which is, "next religion, the chiefest bridle of all vices," and such chastity as was never seen anywhere else than in the island of Bensalem.

All this is made subservient to the introduction of the main subject of the play, the character of Lord Timon and the changes of fortune, which the poet is made to announce as the subject of that very work which he had come to dedicate to the great lord; as if the author himself would speak in character. And we may say of this piece as the poet said to the picture, —

— "to the dumbness of the gesture,  
One might interpret."

It is announced thus: —

*Poet.* I have in this rough work shap'd out a man,  
Whom this beneath world doth embrace and hug  
With amplest entertainment. . . . .

*Paint.* How shall I understand you?

*Poet.* I'll unbolt to you.  
You see how all conditions, how all minds  
(As well of glib and slippery creatures, as  
Of grave and austere quality) tender down  
Their services to Lord Timon: his large fortune,  
Upon his good and gracious nature hanging,  
Subdues and properties to his love and tendance  
All sorts of hearts; —

[ "A noble man and of much worth," says Lucian.]

— yea from the glass-fac'd flatterer  
To Apemantus, that few things loves better  
Than to abhor himself: even he drops down  
The knee before him, and returns in peace  
Most rich in Timon's nod." — *Act I. Sc. 1.*

There is to be some "steep and rough" work in the

<sup>1</sup> Thoreau's *Walden*, 80.

woods among "thorns and briars," not levelled particularly; but a survey is to be taken of "all conditions"; and even Apemantus is constrained to drop the knee before the great lord, as did the other philosopher, who said: "I come with my pitcher to Jacob's well as others do."

The poet continues:—

"Sir, I have upon a high and pleasant hill,  
Feign'd Fortune to be thron'd: the base o' the mount  
Is rank'd with all deserts, all kinds of natures, —

[that is to say, all "characters of natures and dispositions," hitherto too much omitted in Morality and Policy.]—

That labour on the bosom of this sphere  
To propagate their states: amongst them all,  
Whose eyes are on this sovereign lady fix'd,  
One do I personate of Lord Timon's frame;  
Whom Fortune with her ivory hand wafts to her;  
Whose present grace to present slaves and servants  
Translates his rivals.

*Paint.*

'T is conceiv'd to scope.

This throne, this Fortune, and this hill, methinks,  
With one man beckon'd from the rest below,  
Bowing his head against *the steepy mount*  
*To climb his happiness*, would be well express'd  
In our condition. . . . .

*Poet.* When Fortune, in her shift and change of mood,  
Spurns down her late belov'd, all his dependants,  
Which labour'd after him to *the mountain's top*,  
Even on their knees and hands, let him slip down,  
Not one accompanying his declining foot.

*Paint.*

'T is common:

A thousand moral paintings I can show  
That shall demonstrate these quick blows of fortune,  
More pregnantly than words."

Surely, this "high and pleasant hill," this "steepy mount," ranked with all deserts and all kinds of natures at the base, and "this mountain's top," which all that labor on the bosom of this sphere seek *to climb* in search of happiness, can be no other than that same hill of the Muses, and those "tops of mountains," which the traveller, on "the steep and rough," or "the even and level," road of active



life, was to "climb by regular succession, with persevering and indefatigable patience," and by the "several degrees of ascent, as if it had been a *Scala Coeli*," before he should reach a serene station on the height of things; and these "paths of contemplation," placed thus visibly before the eyes in a kind of representative speaking picture, exhibiting "the whole process of the mind and the continuous frame and order of discovery" in the given subject, may be taken as an example of the new method, which those "types and models" were to illustrate; and this is that use of poetry that "tendeth to demonstrate and illustrate that which is taught or delivered," as by "a thousand moral paintings."

Timon was not one of those who had reached the mountain's top, but only "a more disengaged and arduous station" towards the foot, and was still *bowing his head against the steepy mount*. But the poet himself had attained that uppermost elevation, and was able to look down upon him from that high cliff and platform, which is more amply sketched in the Essay of Truth, thus:—

"The poet that beautified the sect that was otherwise inferior to the rest, saith yet excellently well: '*It is a pleasure to stand upon the shore, and to see ships tossed upon the sea; a pleasure to stand in the window of a castle, and to see a battle and the adventures thereof below: but no pleasure is comparable to the standing upon the vantage ground of Truth, (a hill not to be commanded, and where the air is always clear and serene,) and to see the errors and wanderings, and mists, and tempests, in the vale below*' ; so always that this prospect be with pity, and not with swelling or pride." And so that it be done by a Solomon of the New Atlantis, who wears "an aspect as if he pitied men."

The scene next shifts upon the marriage of the old Athenian's daughter, a fair maid, bred "in qualities of the best"; and Lord Timon, like the Tirsan, takes due care that it shall be a chaste marriage, with due consent of

parents, and ample provision is made for Lucilius "to build his fortune" and make him "an equal husband"; all which has a certain close resemblance to the manner of proceeding in the island of Bensalem, where, also, there were many, "not of the meanest quality."

Next comes the feast, which is such a feast as could be given by the Lord Timon in the commonwealth of Athens, rather than exactly a "feast of the family" of the Tirsan; but in many traits, they exhibit a near relationship of the one to the other. *Humanity* is a leading topic in both:—

"2 *Lord*. Thou art going to Lord Timon's feast.

*Apem*. Ay; to see meat fill knaves, and wine heat fools. . . . .

1 *Lord*. He's opposite to humanity. Come, shall we in,

And taste Lord Timon's bounty? he outgoes

The very heart of kindness.

2 *Lord*. He pours it out; Plutus, the god of gold,

Is but his steward. . . . .

1 *Lord*. The noblest mind he carries,

That ever govern'd man." — *Act I. Sc. 1.*

Timon addresses his company of friends in a strain and temper worthy of that "divine instrument," the "governor" of the society and brotherhood of Solomon's House, Apemantus (one chosen from amongst the rest "to live in the house with him," like "the Son of the Vine" in the New Atlantis,) having a table by himself at one side "against the wall," thus:—

"O, no doubt, my good friends, but the gods themselves have provided that I shall have much help from you: how had you been my friends else? why have you that charitable title from thousands, did not you chiefly belong to my heart? . . . . O, you gods, think I, what need we have any friends, if we should ne'er have need of 'em? they were the most need-leas creatures living, should we ne'er have use for 'em: and would most resemble sweet instruments hung up in cases, that keep their sounds to themselves. . . . . We are born to do benefits; and what better or properer can we call our own than the riches of our friends? O, what a precious comfort 'tis, to have so many like brothers, commanding one another's fortunes!" — *Act I. Sc. 2.*

Here we may note a slight resemblance to the language of the New Atlantis; for in Solomon's House there were

to be "divers instruments of music, sweeter than any you have" and "bells and rings that are dainty and sweet."

The feast being over, Cupid enters with "a masque of ladies," and the entertainment ends with music and dancing, much after the manner of the Tirsan's feast. And the whole is closed, in like manner, with a gift of jewels, thus:—

*Tim.* The little casket bring me hither.

*Flav.* Yes, my lord. [*Aside.*] More jewels yet!

*Tim.* . . . . O, my friends!

I have one word to say to you. Look you, my good lord,  
I must entreat you, honour me so much,  
As to advance this jewel; accept it and wear it,  
Kind my lord."

. . . . .

*Apem.* No, I'll nothing; for if I should be brib'd, too, there would be none left to rail upon thee, and then thou would'st sin the faster. . . . .  
What needs these feasts, pomps, and vain glories?

*Tim.* Nay, an you begin to rail on society once, I am sworn not to give regard to you. . . . .

*Apem.* So;—thou wilt not hear me now;—thou shalt not then. I'll lock thy Heaven from thee.

O, that men's ears should be

To counsel deaf, but not to flattery!" — *Act I. Sc. 2.*

The Tirsan's feast was a feast of "consultation" and counsel; Timon's, a feast of flattery; in which Apemantus, however, had "the liberty of a friend," according to what is said in the Essay of Friendship: "So, as there is much difference between the counsel that a friend giveth, and that a man giveth himself, as there is between the counsel of a friend and a flatterer; for there is no such flatterer as a man's self, and there is no such remedy against flattery of a man's self as the liberty of a friend."

There are some further traces of the New Atlantis in the third act, and particularly in Timon's second feast. Without dwelling upon the faithful steward, Flavius, the "one honest man," who, like Bacon's own faithful steward and secretary, Meautys, never deserted him, let us stop only



to observe, that in the second scene Lucius enters with "three strangers." In the New Atlantis, much is said of the mode of entertaining strangers in that island and of the "Stranger's House," in which all the sick were treated with such "rare humanity" and success, that they thought themselves "cast into some divine pool of healing." The same subject recurs, at the end of the first scene, with a somewhat different application, the opposite view of humanity being exhibited in the play, thus: —

*"Flam.* O, may diseases only work upon 't!  
And when he is sick to death, let not that part of nature,  
Which my lord paid for, be of any power  
To expel sickness, but prolong his hour!" — *Act III. Sc. 2.*

And when the strangers offered to pay for the many favours which had left them "confused with joy and kindness," the answer was: "What, twice paid!" for they called him "that taketh rewards twice-paid." So Apemantus considered Timon's bounty to his friends as mere bribery; but he would not himself be "brib'd too." Furthermore, one of these "three strangers" would almost seem to have been acquainted with the father Tirsan, when he speaks thus: —

*"1 Str.* Why this  
Is the world's soul; and just of the same piece  
Is every flatterer's spirit. Who can call him  
His friend, that dips in the same dish? for in  
My knowing, Timon has been this lord's father,  
And kept his credit with his purse,  
Supported his estate; nay, Timon's money  
Has paid his men their wages: he ne'er drinks  
But Timon's silver treads upon his lips; — . . . .

"having oftentimes drank whole cups with me," says Lucian.]

*3 Str.* Religion groans at it.  
*1 Str.* . . . . But I perceive,  
Men must learn now with pity to dispense:  
For policy sits above conscience." — *Act III. Sc. 2.*

The Tirsan's feast was in some sort a public one, and was made at the cost of the state; and it was attended by

the governor. The same idea recurs in Timon's welcome to his friends at the feast of covered dishes : —

"Make not a city feast of it, to let the meat cool ere we can agree upon the first place. . . . You great benefactors, sprinkle our society with thankfulness."

These were not the "wise men of the Society of Solomon's House," but Timon's curse upon them savors strongly of the "Stranger's House," and of the healing of the sick therein, though in quite the opposite manner, thus : —

"Tim.                      This is Timon's last;  
Who, stuck and spangled you with flatteries,  
Washes it off, and sprinkles in your faces  
   [ *Throwing water in their faces.*  
Your reeking villainy. Live loath'd, and long,  
Most smiling, smooth, detested parasites,  
Courteous destroyers, affable wolves, meek bears;  
You fools of fortune, trencher-friends, time's flies,  
Cap and knee slaves, vapours, and minute-jacks !

[ "Again therefore I depart, and will deliver you up to parasites and flatterers and courtizans; — . . . rewarding you as flatterers and wolves," reads Lucian.]

Of man and beast the infinite malady  
Crust you quite o'er! — what, dost thou go?  
Soft, take thy physic first — thou too, — and thou. —  
   [ *Throws the dishes at them.*  
. . . . . Henceforth, be no feast,  
Whereat a villain 's not a welcome guest.  
Burn, house! sink, Athens! henceforth hated be  
Of Timon, man and all humanity."

[ "For I will hate all gods and men at once," Timon says, in Lucian.]

And at the close of the scene, the lord, who had advanced the jewel to his "turban or hat" (as it appears) as in the New Atlantis, speaks thus : —

"3 Lord. He gave me a jewel the other day, and now he has beat it out of my hat: — Did you see my jewel?" — *Act III. Sc. 6.*

Here, let it be noted, also, that, in the Advancement, Bacon speaks of "the gross and palpable flattery, whereunto many not unlearned have abased and abused their wits and

pens," and of "those trencher-philosophers, which in the later age of the Roman State were usually in the houses of great persons, being little better than solemn parasites; of which kind Lucian maketh a merry description"; and this is certainly decisive evidence that Bacon as well as the author of the play had studied Lucian.

In Timon we have the man, who, having traversed the woodlands of nature, and emerged into the more disengaged but more arduous paths of contemplation, pursues that branch of the double road of active life, which is at first "even and level," but conducts to "places precipitous and impassable." In Apemantus, on the other hand, is represented the man, who rather chooses the way which is "steep and rough at the entrance," but with certain "fixed principles" and "indefatigable patience," enduring to suspend his judgment, will mount gradually, and "climb by regular succession" the height of things in the commonwealth of Athens. Timon, having met with a precipitous fall, takes back to the region of thorns and briers, "without the walls of Athens," breaking forth in a terrible outburst of wrath upon the "confusions" of society, thus:—

"Piety and fear,  
Religion to the gods, peace, justice, truth,  
Domestic awe, night rest, and neighborhood,  
Instruction, manners, mysteries, trades,  
Degrees, observances, customs, and laws,  
Decline to your confounding contraries,  
And let confusion live!" — *Act IV. Sc. 1.*

*Confusion* is a favorite idea and word with this writer. "Is there any such happiness," says Bacon, "as for a man's mind to be raised above the confusion of things, where he may have a prospect of the order of nature and the errors of men?" and again, "as nothing doth derogate from the dignity of a state more than confusion of degrees." And Timon says again, "Would'st thou have thyself fall in the confusion of men?" He concludes his diatribe on society



with this desperate resolution: "Timon will to the woods!" But, in Lucian, "he only leaves the city in disgust, and works for hire on a farm, brooding darkly over his evils." The third scene opens in "the woods." Timon is in close communion with physical nature. Among thorns and briers, the path is far from being even and level, or straight and smooth:—

"Tim. All is oblique;  
There 's nothing level in our cursed natures,  
But direct villainy."—*Act IV. Sc. 3.*

"By reason of the ways of nature being partly straight, and partly oblique," says the *De Augmentis*; and the expression seems to have been borrowed from Sophocles:—

Κρεῖον . . . πᾶντα γὰρ  
λέχθαι. — *Antigone*, 1344-5.

He digs for roots and finds gold. While cutting up roots, he throws up treasure with his spade, "digging, I think, where it had been buried," says Lucian. He prefers roots, but will take "some gold" for his purposes:—

"Tim. Earth, yield me roots. . . . [*Digging.*]  
I am *misanthropos*, and hate mankind."—*Act IV. Sc. 3.*

"And let *Misanthropos* be the most agreeable name," says Timon in Lucian.

The first to present himself is "Captain Alcibiades with his women." There was no war in Bensalem; but mention is made of a holy hermit to whom "the spirit of fornication" appeared as "a little foul ugly Æthiop"; but "the spirit of chastity" is described "in the likeness of a fair beautiful cherubin." Timon addresses Alcibiades, thus:—

"Follow thy drum;  
With man's blood paint the ground, gules, gules;  
Religious canons, civil laws are cruel;  
Then what should war be? This fell whore of thine  
Hath in her more destruction than thy sword,  
For all her cherubin look."—*Act IV. Sc. 3.*

In the New Atlantis, "the scroll was signed with a stamp of cherubin's wings."

While yet digging the earth in the woods of nature, his pride unsubdued, he is made to utter forth that fine view of all-producing Nature, which might certainly have been inspired by the Second Philosophy: —

“Common mother, thou,  
Whose womb unmeasurable, and infinite breast,  
Teems, and feeds all; whose self-same mettle,  
Whereof thy proud child, arrogant man, is puff'd,  
Engenders the black toad and adder blue,  
The gilded newt and eyeless venom'd worm,  
With all th' abhor'd births below crisp heaven  
Whereon Hyperion's quickening fire doth shine,  
Yield him, who all the human sons doth hate,  
From forth thy plenteous bosom, one poor root!  
Ensear thy fertile and conception womb;  
Let it no more bring out ingrateful man!  
Go great with tigers, dragons, wolves, and bears;  
Teem with new monsters, whom thy upward face  
Hath to the marbled mansion all above  
Never presented! — O, a root, — dear thanks!  
Dry up thy marrowy vines, and plough-torn leas;  
Whereof ingrateful man, with liquorish draughts,  
And morsels unctuous, greases his pure mind,  
That from it all consideration slips.” — *Act IV. Sc. 3.*

Next appears Apemantus, who complains, that

“Men report,  
Thou dost affect my manners, and dost use them.”

But he tells him,

“This is in thee a nature but infected;  
A poor unmanly melancholy, sprung  
From change of fortune. Why this spade? this place?

[“What a change! . . . bearing thus this heavy spade,” says Lucian.]

Shame not these woods,  
By putting on the cunning of a carper,  
. . . . . 'T is most just  
That thou turn rascal; had'st thou wealth again,  
Rascals should have 't. Do not assume my likeness.”

Apemantus teaches him that he is “a madman” to expect relief for his miseries in these “woods,” which

“To the conflicting elements exposed,  
Answer mere nature.”

For no help is to be had there :—

*"Apem.* If thou didst put this sour-cold habit on  
To castigate thy pride, 't were well."

But the lesson, which this philosopher, who had come to understand things as they are in themselves, and took them for just what they were, no more, no less, himself having reached the serene and delightful station on the height of things, whence he could look down, "with pity, and not with swelling or pride," had to give this proud misanthrope, that never knew "the middle of humanity," but only "the extremity of both ends," and that therefore, in his death, "all living men did hate," was this :—

*"Apem.* Willing misery  
Outlives incertain pomp, is crown'd before:  
The one is filling still, never complete,  
The other, at high wish: best state, contentless,  
Hath a distracted and most wretched being,  
Worse than the worst, content.  
Thou should'st desire to die, being miserable." — *Act IV. Sc. 3*

Timon is furnished from "the woodlands" of nature with a certain rude imagery corresponding to the crude perception which he had come to have of that necessary "difference of degrees," which is discoverable everywhere, and he launches into a discourse on the comparative evils of conflicting qualities in natures, as of the lion, the fox, the ass, the wolf, the leopard, and the rest, concluding that, "all thy safety were remotion; and thy defence, absence":—

*"Apem.* If thou could'st please me with speaking to me, thou might'st have hit upon it here: the commonwealth of Athens is become a forest of beasts."

It was not so, in "the feigned commonwealth" of the island of Bensalem, of which the governor was a man "comely of person, and had an aspect as if he pitied men," and in which, reverence and obedience were given to "the order of nature." Of such a man as Apemantus, or the Governor of Solomon's House, this Timon had never any



just conception, and they ended as such men are apt to do, in all cases, by calling each other hard names : —

*Apem.* Beast!

*Tim.* Slave!

*Apem.* Toad!

*Tim.* Rogue, rogue, rogue!"

"Sick of this false world," Timon would love naught

"But even the mere necessities upon 't."

He retires to his "cave," taking with him his gold, the

"visible god,  
That solder'st close impossibilities  
And mak'st them kiss,"

finding in his natural philosophy of the mere necessities of nature, that the sun, the moon, the sea, the earth,

"each thing 's a thief;—

and he advises all thieves, thus : —

"Steal not less, for this

I give you; and gold confound you howsoe'er!" — *Act IV. Sc. 3.*

This cave scene, like the rest, shows some traces of the Solomon's House of the New Atlantis; for there were to be therein certain "large and deep mines and caves, digged under great hills and mountains," which were to be called "the lower region," and were to be used for "the imitation of natural mines and the producing of new and artificial metals." In some of them, "hermits," that chose to live there, were to be well accommodated with all things necessary, and indeed live very long." But in the play, the poets and painters, who had turned "alchemysts," to make gold, were summarily driven out of the presence even of Timon.

For a commonwealth of Athens become a forest of beasts, Timon had no remedy to propose, but dire and utter destruction; and, indeed, the poet himself would seem to have had no other than "Alcibiades and the Forces": —

"*Tim.* Come not to me again; but say to Athens,  
Timon hath made his everlasting mansion

Upon the beached verge of the salt flood;  
 Who, once a day with his emboss'd froth,  
 The turbulent surge shall cover: thither come,  
 And let my grave-stone be your oracle." — *Act V. Sc. 2.*

This poet was able to make good interpretation and use of the ancient fable of Timon, *Misanthropos*, taking care to follow the story of Lucian, in having him

"Entomb'd upon the very hem o' the sea"; —

that metaphysical and mysterious line, which serves as well to bound the horizon of time out of the great ocean of eternity, as to mark the limit of the ascent of "the steepy mount" toward the angelical supernatural heights of things in the everlasting mansions beyond. And Alcibiades, at the head of repentant Athens, should be able to see thus much of thee, O Timon: —

"yet rich conceit  
 Taught thee to make vast Neptune weep for aye  
 On thy low grave on faults forgiven. Dead  
 Is noble Timon; of whose memory  
 Hereafter more." — *Act V. Sc. 5.*

Again, Bacon, when his fall came, induced by the persuasion of Buckingham and the King, if not commanded by some more forcible appeal, or, perhaps, foreseeing that his only hope was in the King, made a general confession and submission to the House of Lords, with the expectation that they would weigh his fault in a liberal spirit, and pass it over with some slight censure only, — that they would be content to deprive him of the seals, and, sparing "any further sentence," would recommend him to "his majesty's grace and pardon." Protesting he had not "the fountain of a corrupt heart, in a depraved habit of taking rewards to pervert justice," howsoever he might "be frail and partake of the abuses of the times," he nobly resolved not "to trick up an innocency by cavillations," but to make a clear confession of the facts as they were, being willing that they should speak for themselves and himself, and so threw himself upon the magnanimity of the British Senate; and

in that submission, he invoked the example of Quintus Maximus: "who being upon the point to be sentenced, by the intercession of some principal persons of the Senate, was spared"; in which "the discipline of war was no less established by the questioning of Quintus Maximus, than by the punishment of Titus Manlius." But the Lords would not relent: a victim was demanded. In like manner, in this play, Alcibiades, a principal senator, becomes "an humble suitor" to the "virtues" of the Athenian Senate for the pardon of a friend of his, who had

"stepp'd into the law, which is past depth  
To those that without heed do plunge into 't.  
He is a man, setting his fate aside,  
Of comely virtues:  
Nor did he soil the fact with cowardice;  
(An honour in him which buys out his fault)  
But, with a noble fury, and fair spirit,  
Seeing his reputation touch'd to death,  
He did oppose his foe. . . .

1 *Sen.* You cannot make gross sins look clear:  
To revenge is no valour, but to bear.

*Alcib.* My lords, then, under favour, pardon me,  
If I speak like a captain: —

and after pleading the soldier's valor and noble spirit in extenuation of his offence, he declares the felon,

Loaden with irons, wiser than the judge,  
If wisdom be in suffering. O, my lords\*

As you are great, be pitifully good.

. . . . In vain? his service done

At Lacedæmon and Byzantium

Were a sufficient briber for his life. . . .

2 *Sen.* He hath been known to commit outrages,  
And cherish factions. 'T is inferr'd to us,  
His days are foul, and his drink dangerous.

1 *Sen.* He dies.

*Alcib.* Hard fate! he might have died in war.

My lords, if not for any parts in him,

Though his right arm might purchase his own time,

And be in debt to none, yet, more to move you,

Take my deserts to his, and join 'em both: . . .

If by this crime he owes the law his life,

Why, let the war receive 't in valiant gore;



The law is strict, and war is nothing more. . . .

1 *Sen.* We are for law: he dies; urge it no more,  
On height of our displeasure. . . .

*Alciö.* Call me to your remembrances.

2 *Sen.* What!

*Alciö.* I cannot think but your age has forgot me;  
It could not else be, I should prove so base,  
To sue, and be deni'd such common grace.  
My wounds ache at you.

1 *Sen.* Do you dare our anger?  
'T is in but few words, but spacious in effect:  
We banish thee forever.

*Alciö.* Banish me!  
Banish your dotage, banish usury,  
That makes the Senate ugly.

1 *Sen.* If, after two days' shine Athens contain thee,  
Attend our weightier judgment. . . .

*Alciö.* Now the gods keep you old enough; that you may live  
Only in bone, that none may look on you! . . .

. . . . . Banishment!  
It comes not ill; I hate not to be banish'd:  
It is a cause worthy my spleen and fury,  
That I may strike at Athens." — *Act III. Sc. 5.*

There is nothing here, perhaps, that can be specially noted, more than the allusion to "the discipline of war" as in Bacon's "Submission," which is certainly not a little remarkable, together with the general tenor of the ideas and sentiment, especially if they can be considered as having been imparted to this play, after his own fall and banishment from London. At any rate, it may be truly said of himself, that his own banishment came not ill; for besides that he had struck, it is true that he continued to strike, at Athens, in a way scarcely to be dreamed of in Athens itself for a long time to come; nor felt otherwise than as the blows travelled along down and transverberated the ages as they rolled up, with scarcely diminishing force of vibration, and so to continue until they shall be lost, if ever, in the deeper concussions of still more powerful strokes; and every vibration still sweeps some part of the old Athens into oblivion and mere fossil bone.













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